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HISTORY OF ROME

AND

THE ROMAN PEOPLE.

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FROM ITS ORIGIN TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN EMPIRE,

BY

VICTOR DURUY,

MEMBER OF THE INSTITUTE, EX-MINISTER OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, ETC.

EDITED BY THE REV. J. P. MAHAFFY,

PROFESSOR OF ANCIENT HISTORY, TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN,

AND COMPILED AND ARRANGED BY KELLY & CO.

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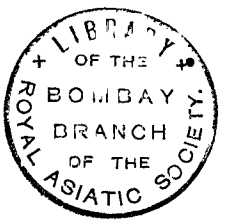
VOLUME IV.—PART II.

(FROM THE ACCESSION OF NERO TO THE DEATH OF TRAJAN.)

WITH 222 WOOD ENGRAVINGS, 4 MAPS, AND 2 CHROMO-LITHOGRAPHS.



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CHAPTER LXXV.

NERO (13 OCTOBER, 54 A.D.—9 JUNE, 68 A.D.).

I.—The "Quinquennium Neronis."

We arrive at the fifth emperor[1] without having yet seen a natural succession, or an adoption determined by reasons of state. The Cæsars did indeed have recourse to adoption, even when they had a legitimate posterity, and this would have been admirable had it been a care for the public welfare which designated the individual; but the selections were usually made at random, at the will of the imperial household or of the prætorian guard. The former desired a prince whom they might lead, the latter an emperor whom they could plunder; and for this anything would do, boy or old man, imbecile[2] pedant, like Claudius, or a ferocious mountebank, like Nero.

The new master of the world was not yet seventeen years of age,[3] he belonged to the *gens Domitia*, and the branch of that family called "brazen-beard" (Ahenobarbus). Every Roman family claimed some connection with the gods, and the legend among the Ahenobarbi was that Castor and Pollux had appeared to one of their ancestors, charging him to announce to the senate the victory of Lake Regillus, and in proof of their divine character had, by a touch, changed his black beard to a russet colour. This characteristic remained in the family; they had also another: it was a harsh and violent race, "heads of iron," said Crassus, "and hearts of lead." The father of Nero had killed a freedman who

[1] The official name of Nero in inscriptions and upon coins is: *Nero Claudius Cæsar Augustus Germanicus.*

[2] The word is used in its Latin sense: Claudius was irresolute, and very feeble in character; not, however, feeble-minded.

[3] He was born at Antium, the 15th of December, 37 A.D. He was short-sighted and carried an eyeglass made of a cut emerald. (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, xxxvii. 64.) The cognomen of the Claudian family, *Nero*, was an old Sabine word meaning brave and hardy: *fortis et strenuus* (Suet., *Tib.*, 1).

refused to drink to intoxication. Upon the Appian Way he had intentionally crushed a child under his horse's hoofs; and once, in the open Forum, had knocked out the eye of a Roman knight who had the boldness to differ from him.

The son was worthy of the father. He was by nature a hypocrite, cowardly, malicious, and as such well prepared for the usual crimes of Roman despots; he possessed, moreover, a certain taste for poetry and art, which, in his incapacity to attain either, rendered him envious of artists and poets, and finally cruel towards them. We have before us a vain and grotesque tyrant, a vile profligate, leaving to history neither a thought nor an act worthy to cover the least of his infamous deeds.

Eminent tutors, however, had not been lacking to Nero; but education is not given by words and books alone; good examples go further than the choicest instruction. Accordingly, the lessons of Burrus and Seneca were less effectual than those taught the young man by the homicidal and licentious court which surrounded him; Nero was what the manners of the time, the violent temper which he inherited, and, above all, the absolute power he attained, made him. The purple which his three predecessors had dipped in the blood of so many victims was, like the shirt of Nessus, impregnated with deadly venom: it infected with the cruelty that made first an executioner and afterwards a victim of the rash man who dared assume it without being capable of defending himself against its subtle poison.

Nero, besides, was not the pupil of a sage; Seneca, to whom Burrus left the care of that imperial education, was not so much the philosopher that he has been called as he was the Rhetorician, a surname that was given to his father. The latter was wont to be declamatory on trivial themes; his son was rhetorical on subjects of philosophy. He was a philosopher in the same way that Lucan was a poet and Tacitus a historian, the latter alone of the three possessing genius.

Seneca is a new example of the practical tendencies of the Roman genius: elegant and skilful in the arrangement of words, he traverses all schools, but stops at none,[1] although that of

[1] Cf. *Epist.*, 33. His writings have no value from the point of view of philosophic originality. He adds nothing to what he borrows.

Zeno seems to have had his literary preference. On the way he gathered up those moral verities which form the common stock of humanity, sure to be found in different proportions by those who look for them, underlying all systems which have endured. "It is only sand without cement," Caligula said of the writings of Seneca, but in that sand glitter specks of gold.[1] Therefore he has remained, like Cicero, one of the instructors of youth; in the time of Quintilian, who judges him with severity and yet with candour, his books were in all schools.[2] There is always this difference between the two philosophers, that the style of Seneca, full of affectations and subtilties, is loaded with an ornamentation which is not the grand style, while the diction of Cicero is a model of Latin elegance. In the latter, everything is simple and done without effort; there is intelligence, and of the best kind, and a rich moral fervour which shows the upright man and good citizen. In the former, the rhetorician's work is too manifest, coldly arranging a production in which there is more art than conviction, less mental power than talent of saying things well. At that epoch, when men trifled with everything, even with life itself, and literature was as in our own days, a trade, Seneca remained to his last moment a consummate actor. His *rôle* was that of the virtuous man; his theme, moral philosophy. He has been called a spiritual director; it was his wish to be so, always provided that he should be excused from directing his own conscience, and he carefully separated his maxims and his conduct. "In his books he condemns tyranny," says an ancient historian,[3] "and he was a tyrant's tutor; courtiers, and he was never absent from court; flattery, and no man ever flattered so basely."[4] He extolled poverty, in the midst of vast wealth;[5] virtue, and if we may

[1] Plutarch in a work which we have lost, but which Petrarch had read, declared that no Greek writer could be compared to him for moral precepts. (Lipsius, *Proleg. in Senec.*)

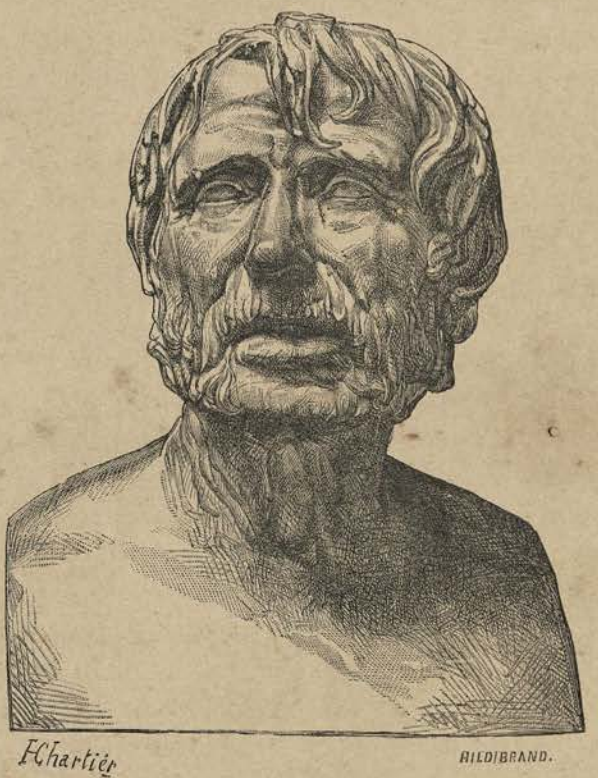
[2] *Inst. orat.*, x. 1. Fronto is still more severe.

[3] Dion, who is very severe to him (cf., lxi. 10; lxii. 2). He accuses Seneca of having, by the exorbitant usury he obtained upon loans, amounting in all to 10,000,000 drachmas, caused in great part the revolt in Britain. Seneca himself admits that he carried his commercial transactions as far as Egypt. (*Epist.*, 77; *De Vitâ beata*, 17.)

[4] Let the reader peruse his *Consolations to Polybus* and his *Treatise on Clemency*, written after the murder of Britannicus.

[5] Tac., *Ann.*, xiii. 42; xiv. 52; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, xiv. 5.

believe Dion,[1] he was scarcely better than his contemporaries; a simple life, in gardens rivalling the emperor's own, and in villas filled with all the luxuries of Roman refinement. "I should like to know," said an ex-proconsul in the open senate during the time of Seneca's greatest favour, "I should like to know by what philosophic procedure he has in four years amassed 300,000,000



Bust of Seneca.[2]

sesterces."[3] To conclude as he had lived, he died with emphasis. In spite of his treatise concerning Providence and his eulogies upon suicide, after the manner of Cato, he held too strongly to life to anticipate Nero; but when the fatal messenger came, he made libations to Jupiter Liberator, declaimed his most brilliant maxims, and, through jealousy, perhaps, encouraged his wife, the beautiful Paulina, to die with him.

[1] Dion, lxi. 10; Tac., *Ann.*, xiii. 42.
[2] Museum of Naples. The authenticity of this bust has been of late disputed.
[3] Tac., *Ann.*, xiii. 42.

These words may seem hard, but we well know, in what concerns action and the energetic and rational conduct of public affairs, what these intellectual men are worth whose cadenced periods should never have been heard save in the prætorium or from the chair of Quintilian. Elsewhere we will do justice to the writer who has best responded to the needs of these terrible days by his philosophy of death.[1] Here we are considering the man, under the assumed character of a sage, whom Agrippina employed as her son's preceptor, and we are forced to acknowledge that this egotist who, after the care of his fortune and reputation, saw nothing of any greater worth than the art of discoursing well, could not be other than a poor teacher and an inadequate minister.

Seneca could not devise for his pupil any better system of education than the method at that time in use, concerning which we have the details. Rhetoric was its basis, and it took the form of a study of the poets, that is, of the abuse of harmonious words, brilliant images, ideas sometimes vague, sometimes too precise, and the perpetual employment of that mythology which made the gods descend upon earth so often that the mind had no cause to look upward to the skies. Suetonius even accuses Seneca of concealing from the young prince the ancient orators whose virile words ruled cities, that he might protect his own discourses from the dangerous comparison between true eloquence and declamation.[2] The pupil, like his master, had a brilliant exterior: for the senate and the public appearance, a grave air, pompous phrases, and effective language. But in private life he was allowed to form low or frivolous tastes. Seneca had anticipated Rousseau's advice: Nero learned to do many things with which it was designed to occupy or distract his mind—he could paint, engrave and carve, could drive a chariot, accompany himself upon the lyre, could even compose verses with assistance.[3] It would

[1] In chapter lxxxvii. § 2. Garat, who set about re-reading Seneca during the Reign of Terror, said: "There was but one thing left for us to learn—how to die." This is almost the whole of Seneca's philosophy. Cf. Havet, *le Christianisme et ses Origines*, vol. ii. p. 256.

[2] *A cognitione veterum oratorum Seneca (principem avertit), quo diutius in admiratione sui detineret (Nero*, 52).

[3] A very able writer says of him: "He painted well, and was a good sculptor; his poetry was good." Suetonius (*Nero*, 52) says in effect, that he did all this, but does not add that he did it well, and Tacitus (*Ann.*, xiii. 3) only gives him credit for having learned the elements

have been far better had he been trained to the management of affairs.

All this, however, would have been well enough if, to regulate such external and multiform activity, the tutor had been able to implant in the heart of his pupil those strong doctrines of duty which are to the moral life what ballast is to the ship—the condition of equilibrium and steadiness. Not that Seneca was sparing of good advice: he gave much and in a magisterial tone. If he wished to recommend clemency, he dedicated to the young prince a treatise on the subject, and made haste to publish it; or he prepared another upon anger, in the finest pedagogic style. Vanity, that disease of artists, so fatal to statesmen, led him to compose on all occasions discourses for his pupil, after each of which the city resounded with praise of the philosopher's wisdom and the writer's genius.[1] This was for his advantage; but such an education, all words and figures, pedantic, declamatory, and false, led Nero to attach no more serious importance to the virtues thus recommended to him than to the other themes habitual to rhetoricians. He listened more willingly and understood better when Seneca said to him what Villeroy remarked to Louis XV. when a boy: "Look at that city, those people: all is yours."[2] What possible use were the maxims of Zeno to this young madman after such teaching as to his omnipotence?

It is not safe to say that this was intention on Seneca's part, and that it was for his advantage, in order to retain the power, to teach Nero no part of his royal trade. To teach this, Seneca needed to know it himself; and it is probable the philosopher had neither the practical sense nor the firm will which make the great minister.[3]

We may also doubt whether the austere reputation of Burrus is more firmly based than that of Seneca. His culpable compliance with Nero's wishes is matter of history, and Josephus, a

of poetry . . . . *Inesse sibi elementa doctrinæ ostendebat* . . . . Nerva, the future emperor, was one of the revisers of Nero's poetry. Cf. Martial, *Epigram.*, vii. 70.

[1] . . . . *Crebris orationibus quas Seneca testificando quam honesta præciperet, vel jactandi ingenii, voce principis vulgabat* (*Ann.*, xiii. 11).

[2] If these are not the exact terms the sense is the same.

[3] Philosophers and men of letters have naturally great indulgence for Seneca; not so historians. Cf. H. Schiller, *Gesch. des Nero, passim*, and pp. 294 *et sqq.*

contemporary, accuses him of having sold to the Syrians, for a great sum of money, the imperial letters which became the cause of the revolt of the Jews and their great war.[1]

This excuse, however, may be made for both: Nero had scarcely emerged from childhood when he came into possession of imperial power; for how long a time will he be able to control his passions, in the midst of a society where the wisest were so rarely masters of theirs? Five years, was the reply of the old historians, who forget that during this much-praised *quinquennium* occurred two murders, that of Britannicus and that of Agrippina. It is true that the removing of an heir presumptive passed for prudence at that time, and that murders in the ruler's own family were regarded as domestic concerns with which the public had no right to intermeddle.

Nero as a Child (Bust of the *Cabinet de France*, No. 3,298).

Like Caligula, Nero began well, and, being spoiled by power, ended as he did. In a discourse composed for him by Seneca,[2] the young emperor promised the senate to take Augustus as his model, and to keep the imperial household distinct from the State, so that public affairs should no longer be managed by favourites and in the secrecy of the palace, but openly by senators and consuls, the legitimate magistrates of the State. The delighted senate sought to bind the new ruler to his promises, decreeing that his words

[1] Πείθουσι [Βοῦρρον] πολλοῖς χρήμασιν (*Ant. Jud.*, xx. 8).

[2] Tacitus remarks that Nero was the first of the Cæsars who had occasion to borrow another's eloquence (*Ann.*, xiii. 3).

should be engraved on a silver plate, and solemnly read aloud by the consuls every year.

But the discourse having been recited, and the show ended, Nero returned to his pleasures and to the young companions who already flattered his dawning passions, finding eulogies for all his follies and excuses for all his crimes. The frivolous and ambitious court gathering about him did not venture, as yet, to enter into rivalry with the other, over which his mother and the old statesmen reigned. Otho, the licentious Petronius whom Nero called the arbiter of taste, and all the gay companions of the young emperor, still respected Agrippina; Burrus awed them, and Seneca was too yielding to excite their ill-will. For the moment Nero is the good son, the good young prince; he has caresses for his mother, pity for the unfortunate, sympathizing words when there must be severity. At the first combat of gladiators he will have no one killed; and one day, when Burrus brings him two death-sentences to sign, he cries, "Alas! I would that I could not write!"[1] Another day when the senate addresses formal thanks to him, he bids them forbear, saying: "Wait until I deserve it." Seneca doubtless suggested the reply; this sentimentality, very uncharacteristic of a Roman, made part of the *rôle* which the philosopher desired his pupil to play, and, believing above all things in well-turned periods and effective phrases, Seneca felt that everything was secured when the prince had well recited his lesson.

Laurelled Agrippina. Gold Coin of the year 51 A.D.

Agrippina, on her part, was not anxious that her son's mind should mature early. She had raised Nero to the imperial throne chiefly that she might reign under his name. It is said that an astrologer had predicted to her that her son should be emperor, but that he would destroy her life. "Let me die," she replied, "if he but reign." Like so many other anecdotes this is made after the event, and shows only one side of Agrippina's character. The sentiment ascribed to her by the French poet is truer:

Je le craindrais bientôt, s'il ne me craignait plus.

The empress could not expect to retain the supreme power

[1] Sen., *de Clem.*, ii. 1.

Sellier pinx.t Imp Fraillery. Percy, chromolith.

GLADIATORS

From a wall-painting at Pompeii

entirely in her own hands, but she hoped to have a share of it. Burrus and Seneca, who owed to her their elevation, and Pallas the freedman, steward of the palace and favourite of the empress, could not be expected to oppose her designs, and Nero himself appeared to agree in the partition of authority. We have seen that[1] she had caused the death of Narcissus for her own interest, and that of Silanus for her son's; and her maternal forethought did not stop here. Had it not been for the opposition of the two ministers[2] she would, by other murders, have freed Nero, without his connivance, from all future obstacles. Accordingly the emperor showed himself grateful for this love of the lioness defending her young with teeth and claws; his first countersign given to the guard was: To the best of mothers. She never left him, writing his despatches, dictating his replies to ambassadors, and that all the city should see her influence over him, she accompanied him in his litter, or caused him to walk beside that in which she was carried.[4] She would not have dared to accompany him to the Curia; but he assembled the senate in the imperial palace, and, behind a veil, she was able to hear all that passed. On one occasion, when Nero was receiving the Armenian deputies, she approached, intending to seat herself at the emperor's side, but Nero, warned by Seneca, came down to meet her, by this mark of respect preventing what

Laurelled Agrippina.[3]

Busts of Nero and Agrippina, borne by an Eagle.[5]

[1] See p. 452. Narcissus had opposed her marriage with Claudius; he also possessed 100,000,000 sesterces, which she secured.

[2] . . . . *Ibaturque in cædes nisi Afranius Burrus et Annæus Seneca obviam issent* (Tac., *Ann.*, xiii. 2).

[3] *Cabinet de France*, Cameo, No. 231.

[4] *Matri summam omnium rerum privatarum publicarumque permisit* (Suet., *Nero*, 9. Cf. Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 11.) Agrippina's head is never alone on the Roman coins, except on Greek or Asiatic pieces; but it is repeated with that of Nero on a large number. Cf. Eckhel, *Doctr. num.*, i. p. lxx. and ii., *passim*; Mionnet, ii., *passim*; Cohen, i. 175-6.

[5] *Cabinet de France*, Cameo, No. 237.

would have scandalized even the Romans of that period: the public manifestation of a woman's arrogant intermeddling in affairs of State.[1]

It soon began to appear necessary to the two ministers to restrain this domination which had disgraced Claudius, and to cause the emperor to be respected, even by his mother. Unfortunately, Burrus and Seneca, notwithstanding the austerity of their doctrines, found no other expedient for breaking down Agrippina's influence than that of encouraging the passions of the young emperor. His friends Otho and Senecio had more licence given them, and Seneca himself was concerned in the intrigue with which Nero's career of profligacy began, one of that philosopher's relatives lending his own name to cover the emperor's *liaison* with Acte, a freedwoman. He excused himself, doubtless, before his own philosophy, by repeating the line which an old commentator on Juvenal attributes to him: "Let us prevent this wild beast from once tasting blood."[2]

Agrippina and Nero (Gold Coin).

Nero threw himself with ardour into the path thus opened to him, and soon began to talk of repudiating his virtuous wife, Octavia, and marrying Acte. Agrippina meanwhile complained that they had given her a slave for a rival; and, by her reproaches, merely alienated her son from herself. Perceiving this, she changed her tone and conduct, and lavished upon him pleasures and gold, for Pallas had made a fortune for her equal to that possessed by the emperor himself. It was, however, too late: her caresses were as ineffectual as her anger had been. "I should prefer," Nero said, "to renounce the imperial power rather than support this tyranny."[3] The ministers, by causing the disgrace of Pallas, left Agrippina no uncertainty as to her own loss of influence.[4] At this blow, Agrippina broke out into threats that she would reveal all: she would present Britannicus to the

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, xiii. 5.

[2] *Ad Sat.*, v. 109: *Non fore sævo illi leoni quin, gustato semel hominis cruore, ingenita redeat sævitia.*

[3] Cf. Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 2; Suet., *Nero*, 28; Dion, lxi. 2.

[4] He was replaced in the management of the finances of the imperial household by the freedman Etruscus, who retained his position until the reign of Domitian. Cf. Statius and Martial.

prætorians, would publish all the crimes of the Cæsars, the poisonings and incest, and would restore to the legitimate heir the paternal crown which an usurper retained to insult his mother.

Nero too well remembered the "food of the gods"[1] not to be beforehand with her. Britannicus, says Tacitus, was entering upon his fifteenth year. On one occasion, at the Saturnalia, Nero and he were playing with other lads of their age, and the party drew lots for the royalty; the lot fell to the emperor, who gave the others orders easy to execute, but bade his brother come forward in the presence of the assembly and sing them some song, to exhibit the fine voice which had been so much praised."[2] Nero hoped to embarrass the boy and raise a laugh at his expense. Britannicus, not at all disconcerted, gave the old verses of Ennius:[3] "O my father! O my country! O house of Priam," etc.

By these complaints of another royal boy deprived of the paternal heritage, Britannicus seemed to recall his own misfortunes and the usurpation. Public emotion was excited; the young emperor's hatred was increased thereby, and from that day he formed the resolution to set himself free from the imprudent youth who dared to remember the past. Locusta was still kept alive, and a tribune of the prætorians had her in charge. Nero called the soldier and ordered a poison which Locusta prepared, but which was too feeble or seemed to the emperor too slow. He threatened the tribune, and struck the poisoner a blow with his own hand; he ordered her immediate execution, but she remonstrated, saying that it was her intention to avoid sudden death in order to conceal the murder. "Am I afraid of the Julian[4] law?" cries the imperial assassin; and he will have Locusta prepare at once in the palace, under his own eyes, a more rapid poison; he tries its effect upon animals, and will have the dose increased.

It had been the custom at table for the younger members of

[1] Θεῶν βρῶμα: this was the name given to mushrooms, in memory of the dish by means of which Claudius had been made a god, by poisoning him.

[2] Suetonius (*Nero*, 33) says that Britannicus had a beautiful voice, and that this was one of the reasons why Nero hated him.

[3] This, at least, is the opinion of Justus Lipsius. The verses are in Cicero (*Tusc.*, iii. 19).

[4] *De veneficiis.*

the imperial family to partake of a separate and more frugal repast in the presence of their elders. Britannicus still sat among the children, but he had formed the habit of eating nothing until the dish had been tasted by a confidential slave. To kill both slave and master would have revealed the crime. Britannicus was handed a beverage which the slave could taste with impunity, but so hot that the prince called for water to render it cooler, and with the water the poison was added to the cup. The unfortunate boy fell senseless. Some screamed with terror, others fled from the table, but those who had most presence of mind remained seated, and looked at Nero, who, with perfect composure, said to them: "This is an attack of epilepsy to which my brother is subject; he will speedily recover consciousness." And he went on drinking, while slaves took up the body to bear it to the funeral pile which had been made ready in advance for the last scion of the Claudian family.

On the morrow Nero issued an edict, in which he apologized for the promptness of the obsequies. It had been, he said, the custom of their ancestors to withdraw from public observation the funerals of the young, not to prolong the grief by more formal obsequies. For himself, deprived of a brother's support, all his hope now depended upon the State—a new motive for the senate and the people to surround with their affection a prince left alone from a family born for the supreme power.

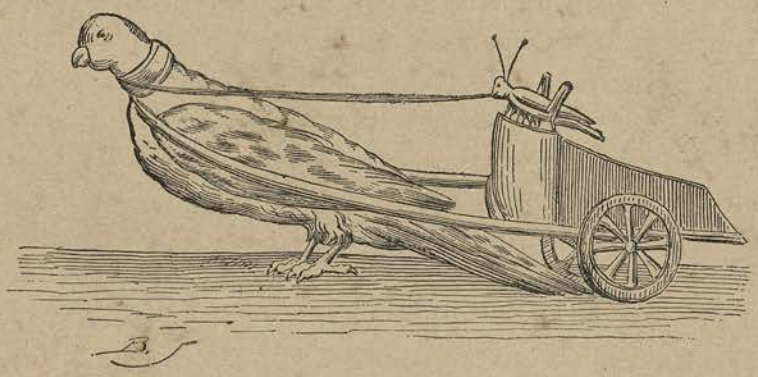
Agrippina, who was present at the banquet, recognized her own teaching, and with Britannicus her last hope perished; nor could she conceal her terror. In the city not a voice was raised against the fratricide, and many even excused it;[1] the noblest, even the most austere, persons in Rome, says Tacitus—by these words doubtless indicating Burrus and Seneca—made themselves accomplices by accepting the lands and palaces of the victim (55 A.D.). Seneca even went further: a few months later he dedicated to Nero his treatise upon Clemency, in which he congratulated the young emperor on not having as yet shed a drop of blood.[2]

[1] *Plerique hominum ignoscebant, antiquas fratrum discordias et insociabile regnum æstimantes* (Tac., *Ann.*, xiii. 17).

[2] *De Clem.*, 1, 2, 9. Merivale even believes (vi., 93–5) that Seneca knew what was done and aided in it. Dr. Raabe, in his work on Nero, expresses the same opinion: *So sind (Seneca und Burrus) und bleiben sie doch immer in den Augen der Nachwelt Kindermörder*" (p. 119).

Locusta also had her reward, impunity and vast domains; with them, however, the obligation to make pupils in her art, which seems to have become an institution of State.[1]

Agrippina, however, did not retire from the conflict. She amassed money, and flattered the senators and centurions, as if to gather a party: at least it was so asserted. Nero then deprived her of her guards and sent her away from the palace; he did not, however, break with her, but, from this time forward, he visited



Nero as a Parrot, driven by Locusta as a Grasshopper.[2]

her rarely, and always accompanied by a guard, as if he feared some treason, and manifesting coldness and embarrassment in his manner towards her. The disgrace of the empress was quickly recognized; all abandoned her save a few women who still visited her, either from some remaining affection, or more probably to take a feminine pleasure in her humiliation. An incident worthy of an oriental court came near precipitating the catastrophe which some persons now began to foresee. Agrippina had a friend, Julia Silana,[3] widow of that Silius who had been Messalina's lover. This person, no longer young but extremely rich, proposed to take a young husband. Agrippina, not so old as Julia, and remaining in

It has, on the other hand, been maintained in Germany (Stahr, *Agrippina*, p. 247), and even in England, that the whole story was a fable. I have said in its place why I do not believe in the murder of Germanicus under Tiberius; for contrary reasons, I absolutely do believe in that of Britannicus under Nero.

[1] . . . . *impunitatem, prædiaque ampla, sed et discipulos dedit* (Suet., *Nero*, 33).

[2] Pompeian painting, often called the Caricature of Seneca, but also regarded as Locusta driving Nero. (Monaco, *le Musée national de Naples*, pl. 16.)

[3] Cf. Borghesi, *Œuvres*, v. 209.

widowhood, considered the intention unbecoming,[1] and prevented the marriage. To revenge herself, Silana caused the empress to be accused by two of her clients of inciting to revolt Rubellius Plautus, who on the mother's side was as near akin to Augustus as was Nero. The emperor was to be assassinated, upon which Agrippina, marrying Rubellius, would reign jointly with him. The two clients dared not go straight to the palace with so grave a revelation, but repeated what they had been taught to a freedman of Nero's aunt Domitia, a mortal enemy of Agrippina, and the freedman, delighted to serve his mistress's hatred, revealed the whole to the actor Paris, an old comrade in slavery. The latter had free entry to the palace at all times, and he now came to the emperor during a nocturnal debauch. On hearing the story Nero was filled with terror and rage: he wished to kill them all, beginning with his mother, and to expel Burrus, who had been blind to this conspiracy, doubtless because he owed his fortune to the empress. Seneca calmed the imperial anger by explaining to Nero, that, although there was an accusation, there were as yet no proofs; and Burrus promised that the empress should die if she could not prove herself innocent.

In the morning Burrus, Seneca, and the freedmen went to her dwelling, and the haughty empress was reduced to appear before her own creatures as an accused person. She did this with her accustomed arrogance, demanded an interview with the emperor, and, instead of begging for her life, ordered her accusers to be punished, and that positions of importance should be bestowed on those who had proved themselves her friends. For once again Nero obeyed his mother. Silana was condemned to exile,[2] her clients, to banishment from Rome, the too zealous freedman, to death, and no notice was taken of the rest.

These gloomy stories of the palace have become, owing to Tacitus and to the general taste for dramatic narrative, almost the sole history of the emperors; there is, however, another, and Seneca and Burrus, now more at liberty, were making it, as they essayed by wise measures to conciliate for their pupil the affection

[1] *Impudicam et vergentem annis dictitans* (Tac., *Ann.*, xiii. 19).

[2] The difference between exile and banishment (*relegatio*) was that the former destroyed, and the latter did not destroy, the civil rights of the person punished.

of the senate and the provinces. These two ministers, who under a different master or with a firmer character of their own, might have preserved their honour, showed sufficient ability in the ordinary affairs of government. They complemented each other well, the philosopher supplying what the soldier and statesman lacked, and they gave the rare example of two friends dividing power without any mutual treason.[1] They took measures against counterfeiters,[2] caused dishonest pleaders to be condemned,[3] suppressed the dues which had been paid to judges, supporting the principle that the State owed its citizens gratuitous justice;[4] and listened to the complaints that were still made against dishonest publicans. This is not to say that the old exactions had reappeared, but only that the people, habituated to order and justice, had become more fastidious. Seneca understood, better than the mocking spitefulness of the *Apokolokyntosis* would make us believe, the new paths upon which men had entered. The citizen of the town of Corduba, the philosopher who, in his writings, even went far to efface the difference between the slave and the patrician, could not in public affairs make great account of Roman supremacy and provincial inferiority. Thus by the progress of ideas, and by reason of the very position of the emperors themselves since the time of Tiberius towards the aristocracy, the provinces saw their condition ameliorated. For twenty years after his death the memory of Nero was cherished in the East, and everywhere, save in Rome and Italy, Domitian was regarded as an excellent ruler.

At the instigation of his counsellors Nero proposed in the year 58 A.D. a measure which we should call very democratic, namely, the suppression, in favour of commerce, industry, and the poor, of all indirect taxes, which would have implied, as a necessary consequence, the augmentation of the taxes on property and on inheritances. The rich, to whom this project was unfavourable, caused the senate to reject the imperial measure, and Tacitus,

[1] It is a singular fact that Seneca and Suetonius never but once mention the name of Burrus (*de Clem.*, 7, and *Nero*, 35), and the two Plinys never. We know him, and only imperfectly, through Tacitus.

[2] Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 41; Suet., *Nero*, 17; Paulus, *Sent.*, v., all of chapter 25, and especially paragraph 6.

[3] Tac., *Ann.*, xiii. 30, 33, 52; xiv. 18, 28, 46.

[4] Suet., *Nero*, 17: *Præbente ærario gratuita.*

always friendly to the higher class, congratulates himself on the failure of a plan which may, perhaps, have been impracticable, but certainly was incomprehensible to him.[1] However, some useful reforms were made. It was directed that the regulations made in regard to each form of tax should be publicly posted, so that the tax-payers might be able to know perfectly how far the rights of the publicans extended. At the end of a year there was release from any tax which the collector might have omitted to levy; for complaints, on the contrary, all days were legal; the magistrates were enjoined never to refuse to examine into an accusation against farmers of the revenue; and all suits of this kind were to be settled in the Forum before the ordinary judges, with a right of appeal to the senate, instead of being brought before the officers of the treasury, in that case both judge and party. Certain advantages were granted the corn-growing provinces in the matter of transportation to Rome: vessels employed in this service ceased to be comprised in the census, so that merchants beyond sea no longer paid any tax upon such portion of their fortune as was represented by their vessels. The mania for games had seized upon the provinces; all the governors desired to celebrate them, but they were forbidden to do so, since it was usually the inhabitants upon whom fell

Rope Dancer, as Faun (Monaco, pl. 16).

[1] *Ann.*, xiii. 50–51.

the costs of this ruinous display. Further regulations of a very wise character, says Tacitus, were established, but they were not long observed. The suppression of the tax of the fortieth and fiftieth,[1] and of some other dues illegally levied, continued up to the time of Trajan.

At Rome, the guards stationed to preserve order at the games were withdrawn, in order that the people might appear more free, but really that the discipline of the soldiers might not be impaired. Men who had served as informers were sought out, and their recompense reduced to one-fourth of what the Poppæan law had allowed; senators who were in needy circumstances were relieved;[2] the poor were protected against the quæstors of the treasury, who used their right of search too severely; the public credit was reinforced by a gift of 40,000,000 sesterces to the *ærarium;*[3] the people, finally, received distributions of money and provisions, and especially were entertained with games and theatrical representations. Notwithstanding Nero's taste for amusements of this kind, play-actors and charioteers were expelled from Italy, for the theatre and the circus had become places for cabals and factions.

Another measure was directly for the benefit of slaves: at Rome the prefect of the city, and in the provinces the governors, were required to receive the complaints of slaves suffering from the cruelty of their masters,[4] and later the Antonines instituted for cases of the kind a severe penalty. This is a proof of movement towards a more generous solution of this great social question; it had already begun under Claudius, and will be seen to increase in almost every reign, and bring about important changes in legislation. But the old Roman party which had just proposed the law against freedmen were able to obtain the passage of a still more terrible one, namely, condemning all the slaves of an assassinated master and those enfranchised by will who resided

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, xii. 51. The four per cent. tax on the price of slaves was henceforth paid, not as formerly by the buyer, but by the seller, as was the case in all sales; but this in reality made no difference, since the seller augmented his price by so much. (*Ann.*, xiii. 31.)

[2] They received an annual donation of 500,000 sesterces (Suet., *Nero*, 10).

[3] In the year 62 the emperor complained in an edict that he was obliged to give every year 60,000,000 sesterces to the State, to refill the exhausted *ærarium*, and he appointed a commission composed of three ex-consuls, *ad vectigalia publica*, doubtless to take measures to make good the deficit. (Tac., *Ann.*, xv. 18.)

[4] Sen., *de Benef.*, iii. 22; *Digest*, i. 12, 1, § 1; *ibid.*, xiii. 7, 24, § 3.

under his roof, to share the punishment of the murderer. If they were not guilty of killing their master, they were at least criminal in not having defended him.[1] An occasion shortly presented itself for enforcing this terrible law. The prefect of the city having been assassinated, all his slaves, four hundred in number, were ordered to execution. The populace, seeking to deliver them, armed themselves with stones and sticks, but Nero promulgated a severe edict, and lined the streets through which the condemned were to pass with the prætorian cohorts. The people now began to have pity for these unfortunate beings whom at an earlier period they had regarded as only good to furnish amusement in being thrown to wild beasts in the amphitheatre. Nero was the author of the law, which he observed for many years, of never admitting sons of freedmen to a seat in the senate.

Through dislike of the palace functionaries and their late domination, in the time of Claudius, the senate were disposed to increase the severity of the laws in respect to freedmen, by permitting patrons to restore to servitude those who had shown themselves unworthy of liberty. This was calling in question the position of a crowd of citizens. The emperor wisely refused any general measure of the kind, and only authorized individual prosecutions on account of particular occurrences;[2] but he suffered the senate to suppress the fees of the advocates and the obligation for quæstors-elect to give games of gladiators: a two-fold favour to the aristocracy, since the former decision, by removing the poor from the bar, gave over to the rich the influence which that function secured; and the latter relieved of a heavy expense the young nobles who were entering on public life.

Some few changes were made in respect to the jurisdiction of the inferior magistrates. What remained of the prerogatives of the tribunes and ædiles was still further diminished to the advantage of the prætors and consuls, so that the two former offices, once so important in the State, sank to the condition of simple magistracies of the city of Rome. The quæstors, to whom Claudius had intrusted the administration of the treasury, lacked authority by reason of

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, xiii. 32.
[2] *Ibid.*, 26-27.

their youth; and the old regulation of Augustus was revived, giving this office to ex-prætors.[1]

Upon the whole, Burrus and Seneca, aided by the senate, for whom they manifested great consideration, guided the State sensibly. The young ruler himself, in his public life, appeared with dignity. When, as consul, he sat upon the tribunal, he was attentive, and listened carefully to those who pleaded before him, forbidding long harangues; upon the conclusion of the case, he did not at once give a decision, but put it in writing the following day, after having privately consulted with the other judges. This parade of conscientiousness ended with the sitting of the court, and Rome, which had marvelled at his precocious gravity, learned with amazement that its emperor ran about the city streets by night in the disguise of a slave, frequenting shops and taverns to break and pillage, or attacking late pedestrians, at the risk of finding some one stronger than himself.[2] Thus it happened that a senator, Julius Montanus, gave him back with interest the blows received, and very nearly caused the emperor's death. But Julius had the imprudence to recognize his sovereign brawler, and the still greater folly of humbly apologizing for the act. Upon this the emperor bethought himself of his tribunitian inviolability, and the senator was obliged to die by his own hand. From that time forward Nero did not again risk himself without guards, who followed him at a distance, and in case of need interposed an armed defence.[3] By day, in the theatre, the emperor disturbed public order, encouraging the applause or the outcries, exciting the people to break the benches and to fight each other on the stage, ending by himself taking part in the encounter, and throwing missiles from his high seat, one of which, striking a prætor, wounded him in the hand.[4]

These coarse follies were only whims willingly pardoned in the young emperor. Sons of good families and young fops (*trossuli*) considered these proceedings vastly amusing, and delighted to

[1] Upon these reforms, see Tac., *Ann.*, xiii. 26-29, 31, 34. Suetonius says (*Nero*, 16): *Multa sub eo animadversa severe et coercita nec minus instituta.*

[2] [These pranks are attributed to Antiochus Epiphanes by Polybius, and to our Prince Henry (V.) by Shakespeare.—*Ed.*]

[3] Tac., *Ann.*, xiii. 25.

[4] Suet., *Nero*, 26.

imitate them, which they did so effectually that, according to Tacitus, Rome by night resembled a city taken by assault. Moreover, it was but the obscure crowd who as yet furnished material for the imperial amusements. But passions grew apace and crimes were about to begin.

II.—Murders and Orgies.

Otho had married Sabina Poppæa, esteemed the most beautiful woman in Rome. The very type of an ambitious coquette,[1] the model of those women who have not the excuse of passion for their misconduct, she loved herself only, worshipped only her own beauty, and cared for nothing but to secure the supremacy of her own fascinations. She hoped to die before losing the charms of her face, and to increase their effect she was never seen without a veil. Otho was deeply enamoured of Poppæa;[3] but he committed the error of praising her to Nero, who desired to see her. Fascinated and allured by artful denials and skilful coqueting, he soon forgot both the virtuous Octavia, his own wife, and his imprudent favourite, the husband of Poppæa. Otho was exiled, as governor of Lusitania (58 A.D.), and detained in that remote province for ten years.

Poppæa.[2]

Up to this time Nero had concealed his irregularities and vices.[4] Under the influence of this arrogant and artful woman, who had risked all to reach the point where she now stood, he ceased to control his evil dispositions, and his two ministers lost ground as Poppæa gained it. Too proud to remain the emperor's mistress, Poppæa desired to share the imperial throne. Two women hindered the fulfilment of her wish: Octavia, the legitimate wife, and Agrippina, who was not disposed to have the marriage

[1] She employed all recipes at that time known, and they were already numerous, to prevent . . . . . *des ans l'irréparable outrage.* She covered her face with a mask as a protection against the sun, and wherever she went a herd of 500 she asses followed her, to supply milk for the baths whereby she sought to preserve the freshness of her skin.

[2] ΠΟΠΠΑΙΑ ΝΕΡΩΝΟΣ ΣΕΒ (Poppæa, wife of Nero Augustus). Silver coin.

[3] Her statues were overthrown at the same time with Nero's; but Otho, upon his accession, had them replaced.

[4] Tac., *Ann.*, xiii. 47.

she had brought about broken off in favour of a rival vastly more dangerous than the freedwoman Acte. Agrippina was the more formidable of the two, for—daughter of Germanicus and lineal descendant of Augustus, sister of Caligula, and wife of Claudius—she united in her own person all the prestige, and, many persons were not far from thinking, all the rights of the imperial house in which Domitius Nero was but a stranger. Would she have gone so far as to make good her threats? Would she have been willing to overthrow the fortune she herself had reared? It is difficult to believe that she would, although we can easily imagine the commission of one crime more in this family of Roman Atridæ. Poppæa made it her business to persuade Nero that his life was in danger, and Nero, weary of obeying when all the world beside yielded obedience to him, had already substituted hatred for affection towards Agrippina. Poppæa irritated by sarcasms the impetuous youth, and at other times she pointed out to him the insulting pride, the dangerous ambition, of this woman who would not hesitate to sacrifice her son to her ancestors and to herself.

Octavia and Nero.[1]

Nero was only too willing to listen to language like this. The idea of ridding himself of an inconvenient censor, already familiar to his mind, no longer alarmed him; for some time he had hesitated not so much at the heinousness of crime as in respect to the means of accomplishing it. Steel left traces, and it was not easy to administer poison: Agrippina remembered too well the mushrooms which had despatched Claudius and the cup served to Britannicus; she had, moreover, it was said, familiarized herself with antidotes, and might save herself even after an act of imprudence. The freedman Anicetus, in command of the fleet at Misenum, proposed a plan which seemed likely to keep away all suspicion. Nero was at Baiæ; he invited his mother thither by affectionate letters, loaded her with demonstrations of devotion, and after supper himself attended her to the splendidly appointed vessel which awaited her.

[1] NERO. CLAV. CÆS. AVG. GERM. IMP. TR. P. COS. Heads of Octavia and Nero facing each other, surmounted, the former by a crescent, the latter by a star. Bronze coin.

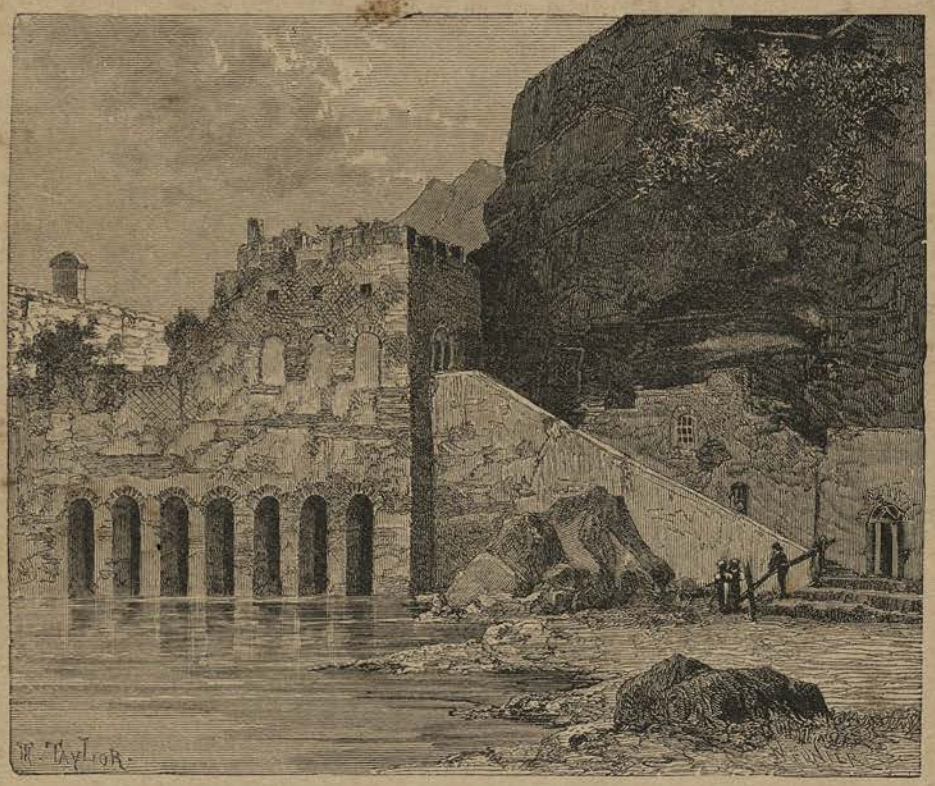
The gods, says Tacitus, seemed to have prepared specially for that night the radiance of the celestial fires and the calm of a peaceful sea. The vessel pursued its silent course; one of Agrippina's women, sitting at the foot of her mistress's couch, was talking with rapture of the emperor's change of feeling, of his manifestations of affection, and of the favour in which Agrippina was now held. Suddenly a crash was heard, the vessel gave way, and the waves rushed in through a great gap; one of the officers

Interior View of Nero's Hot Bath at Baiæ (Engraving in the Nat. Library, Paris).

on guard near the empress was crushed in the disaster, but the canopy over the bed protected the empress and her attendant. Freeing herself from the wreck, the latter, in order to attract notice and secure her own safety, cries out that she is the emperor's mother, upon which she is despatched with oars and boat-hooks. Agrippina, keeping silent, swims, although wounded, and, being picked up by a boat, finally reaches Lake Lucrinus and her country-house.

The crime was too evident; the empress, however, feigned not to be aware of it lest it should be accomplished, and sent word at once to her son that the goodness of the gods and the fortune of the emperor had saved her from the greatest danger.

Nero was already aware of the event, and, alarmed at the idea of his mother's anger and the probability that she would excite the prætorians against him, he asked counsel of Seneca and Burrus, who perhaps had not been aware of the meditated crime.[1] They remained for a long time silent; at last Seneca spoke: Would the soldiery be willing to complete the murder, he inquired of the



Baths of Nero at Baiæ, seen from the sea.

prætorian prefect. But Burrus, on behalf of his prætorians, declined the task. "They are too much attached," he said, "to the family of the Cæsars and also to the memory of Germanicus; let Anicetus finish what he has begun." The freedman accepted the proposal. "At last," Nero said, "I shall reign."

The conference was just ending when Agrippina's messenger

[1] Xiphilinus, following Dion (lxi. 13) accuses Seneca of being the instigator of the murder, affirming that there are numerous witnesses on this point. Tacitus limits himself to saying: . . . . *incertum an et ante ignaros* (*Ann.*, xiv. 7).

arrived. Nero let a dagger fall at the man's feet, and cried out "An assassin!" He was seized and loaded with chains. Nero had now the pretext that Roman baseness needed to transfer the blame: it is the mother who had tried to kill her son, and in despair at the failure had attempted her own life. The murderers penetrated to the bed-chamber of the empress; one of them struck her on the head,[1] and she was quickly despatched.

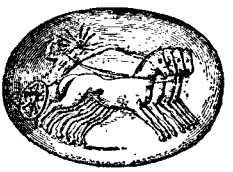
No sooner was the infamous crime committed than Nero had a moment of remorse and terror. His base counsellors hastened to his relief, while Seneca wrote to the senate in the emperor's name, to accuse Agrippina and thank the tutelary genius of the Empire, which had sought by a shipwreck to frustrate her guilty designs.[2] Burrus brought the centurions and tribunes to the emperor to felicitate him on having escaped his mother's conspiracy. The cue was given: the victim became the assassin. The temples stood open, incense smoked upon the altars; the whole court, then the senate, the adjacent cities, the provinces, all united in thanking the gods for the emperor's safety. There was a general rivalry throughout the Empire, in stifling, by outbursts of rejoicing, the cry of nature in the murderer's heart.[3] One man alone, on the day when the senate vowed statues to Minerva and to the emperor on account of the discovery of the pretended conspiracy—one man alone, Thrasea, had the courage to rise and go out: "Useless and dangerous courage," Tacitus says. But it was not useless; for this silent protest showed at least that there were yet those "that had not bowed the knee to Baal." It was indeed needful that some one, though at the cost of his life, should guard and transmit the sacred trust of conscience. In pagan Rome, this honour belongs to the Stoics; and Thrasea, with his wife, daughter of the heroic Arria, and his son-in-law Helvidius Priscus, were at the time the most illustrious representatives of that school. An isolated group, they could but give the tyrant the lesson of their silence.

[1] *Feri ventrem*, she is reported to have exclaimed. (Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 8.)

[2] Quintilian cites a passage from this letter (viii. 5, 18): *Salvum me esse adhuc nec credo, nec gaudeo.*

[3] Quintilian further quotes the words of Julius Africanus, in the name of Gaul: *Rogant te, Cæsar, Galliæ tuæ ut felicitatem tuam fortiter feras* (*ibid.* 16). The Arval Brethren offered sacrifices at the Capitol, in the Forum, and before the paternal house of Nero, thanking the gods for his safety. (Henzen, *Scavi nel bosco sacro dei fratelli Arvali*, p. 20.)

This lesson, however, was unheard by him amidst the acclamations of the public. When he returned from Campania to Rome, the tribunes came out to meet him, the senate had put on festal garments, women and children were ranged in bands according to age and sex as in religious ceremonies, and everywhere amphitheatres were erected as in the case of triumphs. Imperial Rome celebrated the murderer's festival, and Nero triumphed through the baseness of the Romans. What thoughts occupied his mind as he made his way up to the Capitol, through the crowded masses of human beings, as guilty as himself, since they so willingly became his accomplices? At what caprices, what crimes, will he now hesitate, since it is not alone their political rights but their consciences which these men have surrendered into his hands?



Apollo, the Sun God, in a chariot with four horses.[1]

Poppæa had now only Octavia to fear. This young woman, innocent and unprotected interested the people, and a remnant of affection for fallen royalty protected in Nero's house the daughter of Claudius. Octavia, moreover, made no effort against her unworthy rival: gentle and submissive, she yielded at every point to Poppæa, who, to make herself more sure of her sway, removed Nero from public affairs and incited him to all forms of disorder.

His first whim was to drive a chariot in the circus. Seneca remonstrated, urging the dignity of his position, but Nero knew his Homer, and cited the ancient heroes, and Apollo, the divine charioteer, and mythology, and the history of Greece. For the Greeks, public games were a noble recreation, like the tournaments of the Middle Ages. At Rome, where these games had been abandoned to slaves, they became what slaves could make them, a school of infamy, branding all those who took part in them. Nero, the least Roman of all the emperors, saw no disgrace in following these foreign customs. He believed himself to be copying when he parodied Greek life. His ministers gave way; in the valley of the Vatican an inclosure was prepared wherein he might display his skill, under the eyes of the court. But the plaudits of the

[1] Engraved gem in the *Cabinet de France*, No. 1,479.

courtiers had, he thought, a suspicious air of flattery; he would have the applause of the people as well, and the crowd, being admitted, were so lavish of their acclamations that the gratified emperor believed that he had surpassed the most famous victors.

His relish for public applause being excited by this easy success, he also desired to gratify his vanity as a poet and singer. A court theatre was prepared, and upon its stage, to prepare the way for the imperial mountebank, ex-consuls and women of the highest rank represented the most shameless plays, after which Nero sang his verses, accompanying himself upon the lyre; a cohort of prætorians, with their centurions and tribunes, were present, and Burrus, in deep distress and shame, but loud in his applause (59 A.D.).[1]

Nero driving a Chariot.[2]

In his passion for Greek shows, he conceived the idea, the following year, of establishing a competition between orators and poets, and after that, the Neronian games, celebrated every five years at the expense of the State, where were offered prizes for music,[3] for riding, and for gymnastic exercises. At the first contest the judges naturally decreed to the emperor the palm of eloquence and poetry; and the senate, not to be left behind, decreed thanks to the gods for this victory which decorated Rome with a new glory, and the verses of the poetic Cæsar, engraved in golden letters, were dedicated to Jupiter Capitolinus. But servile decrees were no novelty: Nero obtained more than that from the obsequious senate. During his reign, short as it was, 400 senators and 600 knights went down into the arena as gladiators.[4] They had not even the honour which was allowed the slaves, that of death, valiantly

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 15.

[2] Cameo of the fifth century. Nero standing in a quadriga, the rayed crown upon his head, holds in the right hand the *mappa circensis*, a white cloth, with which the presiding officer at the games gave the signal. In his left hand he holds the consular sceptre. The legend reads thus: NEPON ΑΓΟΥΣΤΕ. (Chabouillet, *op. cit.*, No. 238.)

[3] Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 21; Suet., *Nero*, 12.

[4] These are the figures given by Suetonius (*Nero*, 12). I am disposed to cut off a cipher from each of these numbers.

given or received: Nero, for once at least, forbade that the blows should be mortal. However, he made some of them fight with wild beasts, and the latter were certainly quite capable of failing to observe this discretion. Suetonius says: "Many positions in the circus were filled by knights and senators."[1]

"Every day, during these games, provisions and presents of all kinds were distributed to the people; thousands of birds, meats in profusion, tickets for corn, garments, gold, silver, and gems, pearls, pictures, slaves, beasts of burden, tamed animals, even vessels, islands and estates." For the populace of Rome the Empire was a well-spread table.

Nero, Victor in the Greek Games.[2]

Nero was at this time twenty-two years of age. Notwithstanding his connection with Poppæa, his murder of Britannicus and Agrippina, his shameful orgies, and the public scandals of his reign, Seneca and Burrus commended themselves for their toleration. They believed they had gained, in return for the crimes they had not prevented and the pleasures they had allowed, liberty to work for the good of the State.

Rome, indeed, Italy and the provinces, were leading a peaceful life. The city, whatever Tacitus may say, certainly was not given up to pillage every night. The promises which the emperor had made at his accession were still observed. The senate[3] and the

[1] *Ex iisdem ordinibus varia arenæ ministeria* (Suet., *Nero*, 12).

[2] Bust of Parian Marble (Museum of the Louvre). Nero wears the rayed crown with eight rays.

[3] To increase the respect felt for senators, the emperor decreed that for appeals to the

consuls had charge of important affairs, and public office was now sought for as it had not been for many years. In the year 60, for the prætorship, which was in the gift of the senate, there was such violent canvassing that the intervention of the emperor became necessary. Nero settled the dispute, compensating each of the three unsuccessful candidates with the command of a legion.[1] The laws were executed and crimes punished, even in the case of powerful offenders. A tribune of the people having committed a murder, fell under the penalty of the Cornelian law *de Sicariis*; a senator, several knights, and a quæstor were exiled for forging wills (61 A.D.).[2] A person belonging to the imperial household, accused of selling the emperor's favour, having uttered written insults against the senate and the pontiffs, was banished from Italy.[3] The law concerning treason was sinking into oblivion; since the time of Claudius no use had been made of it. Nero had, it is true, exiled to Marseilles Cornelius Sylla, accused of a design to surprise and kill the emperor during one of his orgies. The charge was false, for if there were frequently conspiracies in the Curia, the freedmen, to promote their own consequence, more frequently pretended to discover them in the palace.[4] This exile of Sylla was the prelude to the war Nero was about to begin upon all whom he regarded as claimants for the throne. In this ill-constituted State, the reigning emperor expiated his tyranny by the terror which the future emperor occasioned him. However, as yet there had been no murder by forms of law, and even the ruler had been heard, during an illness, to mention the names of possible successors and indicate one of them, Memmius Regulus, as, in his judgment, most suitable. But another Roman of the old school, Rubellius Plautus, belonging on the mother's side to the Julian family, having, notwithstanding his reserve and the obscurity in which he kept himself, attracted public attention, Nero

senate the same amount of money should be deposited as in the case of appeals to the emperor.

[1] *Ann.*, xiv. 28. In 62 A.D. it became necessary to prohibit fictitious adoptions, because many, in order to have the benefit of the preference accorded by the Papian-Poppæan law to fathers of families, made adoptions and annulled them after the election. Cf. *Ibid.*, xv. 19.

[2] Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 40: *lege Cornelia damnatur.* This law pronounced deportation and confiscation, and, for slaves, death. (*Digest*, xlviii. 10, fr. i. § 13.)

[3] Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 50.

[4] *Ibid.*, xiii. 47.

ordered him to go and live upon his estates in Asia, for the sake of the general tranquillity;[1] and two years later the emperor had him assassinated there. It was not until the year 62 that charges of treason began to be made. A prætor, Antistius Sosianus, in the presence of a numerous company, recited a satirical poem upon Nero. Being brought before the senate he was condemned, at the instance of Thrasea, to exile upon an island, with confiscation of property.[2] Thrasea had applied to the case only the law concerning libel—an ingenious evasion whereby the more formidable weapon remained in its sheath. The same sentence was passed in the case of Fabricius Veiento, accused of libelling the emperor and the pontiffs; he was expelled from Italy, and his writings ordered to be burned, "which," says Tacitus, "were sought for and read with avidity so long as there was danger in doing it, and fell into oblivion when it was permitted to possess them."[3] Cornutus was guilty of but one retort. Nero proposed to write the poetical history of Rome, in 400 books: "That is too much," he said; "no one would read it." And this remark sent him into exile.

Italy did not recover its population, because the foreign importation of corn,[4] the great domains, accumulated by confiscations, in possession of the ruler and his favourites, and, lastly, the constant emigration of the free inhabitants, rendered agriculture onerous and the fields desert. Nero wished to send veterans to colonize Antium and Tarentum, where there were no inhabitants; but not one was willing to go;[5] they preferred to settle in the provinces where they had served. Campania alone, in the peninsula, was flourishing, thanks to its fine climate and extensive commerce. Puteoli was so rich that the city had combats of gladiators, to which all Campania flocked, and disturbances between nobles and

[1] *Consuleret quieti Urbis* (Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 22).

[2] *Ibid.*, 48, 49.

[3] *Ibid.*, 50.

[4] The importation of grain went on at Rome upon so large a scale that the price was not raised in the year 63, although Nero caused all that had been spoiled to be recovered from the people and thrown into the Tiber, and a tempest had destroyed, in the river and at Ostia, three hundred vessels. (Tac., *Ann.*, xv. 18.)

[5] *Ibid.*, xiv. 27. Upper Italy did not share in this decline, and the population of the Maritime Alps was so Romanized that in 63 A.D. Nero gave them the *jus Latii*. (Tac., *Ann.*, xv. 32.)

plebeians, as formerly in Rome. On one occasion there were brought to Rome a great number of people of Nuceria who had been wounded and mutilated in a severe affray with some Pompeians,[1] and the senate was obliged to interfere: Pompeii lost for ten years the right of giving combats of gladiators; all

Contest between the Nucerians and the Pompeians (Painting in Pompeii).[2]

unauthorized associations were broken up and many citizens condemned to exile.

A chastisement more terrible came upon Pompeii from a neighbour she did not fear. In 63, Vesuvius, which had been quiet for thousands of years, became active, without, however, opening its crater, and an earthquake took place which almost destroyed Pompeii and Herculaneum. The inhabitants of the two cities, up to this time so prosperous, had accumulated great wealth,

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 17. In the year 61 Nero was obliged to write to the Lacedæmonians, reproaching them for their abuse of the liberty that had been allowed them (Philostratus, *Apoll. Tyan. vita*, iv. 11).

[2] This fresco, now in the Museum of Naples, was discovered in May, 1869, near the amphitheatre. It was published in the *Giornale degli scavi di Pompei, nuova serie*, etc. (1868-1869), vol. i. tav. vii.

and they quickly rebuilt their ruined edifices. A citizen of Herculaneum, Nonius Balbus, at his own expense, restored the city walls and the basilica; and we have statues still existing which his grateful fellow-citizens erected both to him and to his son and other members of his family.

Syracuse, one of the stations of the Alexandrian commerce, solicited the permission to celebrate more games during the year, and

The Younger Balbus.[1]

to employ in the contests of the circus a larger number of combatants than the law allowed. Thrasea did this proposition the honour to oppose it. Perhaps the rigid Stoic saw further than Tacitus understood, and had other reasons than those which the historian alleges for refusing to waive the law. He could judge what her amphitheatre, her distributions of corn, her idle populace, had made of Rome, and he dreaded for the cities of the provinces, so eager to imitate the capital, the same corruption and the same

[1] Marble statue found at Herculaneum.

misery. But no one listened to Thrasea; and this mania of taking Rome for a model was destined to extend to the most remote cities: the Treviri were all in the circus on the day when the barbarians surprised their city.

Prosperity has no history; a gentle and peaceful life passed in calm happiness flows on in quiet obscurity. The absence of events in the provinces would therefore be a reason for believing them prosperous, even had we no knowledge of the change which within a few years the most important of them underwent. Let any one compare the Spain of Strabo with that of Pliny, the Gaul of the one and that of the other. And yet, between the two writers, there is not half a century's interval. In the time with which we are now concerned are to be found two significant facts: the one belonging to the year 60 the other to 59. An earthquake had destroyed Laodicea, one of the great cities of Asia. Its inhabitants rebuilt it from their own resources without deigning to solicit aid, which would not have been refused them;[1] they were too rich to come before the emperor as mendicants. But let a fire desolate the capital, and the provincials will offer what in like case they no longer ask for themselves, Lyons alone sending 4,000,000 sesterces. Immense domains in the Cyrenaica, the property of Apion, a former king, belonged to the State, but they had been encroached upon, and Claudius had caused an exact investigation to be made by Acilius Strabo, the governor. The Cyrenians maintained that prescription was in their favour, which was not, however, correct, since the Roman laws did not admit that the rights of the State could ever be lost in that way. The affair was referred by the senate to the emperor, who approved the proprætor's decisions, because they were legal, but yielded to the allies what they had usurped, because equity and policy alike required it.[2] Such was the situation of the provincial cities, and such the spirit of the imperial government, even under Nero.

The social centre of gravity was passing over to the vanquished:

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 27: *Nullo a nobis remedio, propriis opibus revaluit.* The liberal aid bestowed by Augustus and Tiberius in similar cases will be remembered, also the public works executed in the provinces. An inscription shows a procurator in Nero's reign reconstructing a road from Apamea to Nicæa, *vetustate collapsam* (*C. I. L.*, iii. 346).

[2] Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 18.

the first place in the senate, as well as the first rank among Roman authors, belonged to a foreigner, the Spaniard Seneca, and he was the only person, on a day of needful modesty, to be astonished at this good fortune.[1] At his side were living a whole colony of his fellow-countrymen: his two brothers, Gallio and Mela, of whom the former had been governor of Achaia and consul, while the latter had grown wealthy in financial posts; his nephew Lucan, the poet; Martial, composer of epigrams which contain great wit, but greater obscenity, together with the meanest mendicancy; Pomponius Mela, the geographer; Quintilian, the rhetorician, who has been made the arbiter of eloquence—of that, namely, which escapes all law, but whose book is really a treatise upon education; finally, Columella of Gades, who had the courage to undertake at one and the same time to reconstruct the *Res rustica* of Cato and Varro's work of the same title, and to complete the *Georgics* of Virgil.[2] This Spanish colony, which lacked no kind of literary ambition, eclipsed that of Gaul, which, in earlier days, had held the place of honour and given Rome Cornelius Gallus, the rival of Tibullus, Trogus Pompeius the historian, Votienus Montanus, one of the victims of Tiberius, and Domitius Afer, that emperor's favourite historian. The Massilian Petronius, however, *elegantiæ arbiter*, still ruled the fashion and the court. Africa was represented by Cornutus the Stoic, and Asia by Apollonius of Tyana, who, however, never lingered long at Rome. Italy seemed to be exhausted, and, by the bitterness of her poets' words, showed the forsaken queen.

This literature of decay, where method takes the place of inspiration and the rules of the school are substituted for genius—where a crowd of grammarians and rhetoricians teach, at the most moderate price, the art of inventing, after the spirit of invention is dead—may be of interest to those curious in such matters, but history finds nothing in it, save some details of manners and the proof of the degeneracy of art. The philosophic writings of Seneca must be excepted, as they furnish useful information for the study of ideas. This provincial invasion was not profitable therefore to

[1] *Ann.*, xiv. 53.

[2] Some persons, but without good reason, have believed Silius Italicus, author of the very prosaic poem on the second Punic war, to be a Spaniard. Spain also gave to Rome the consul Balbus and his brother, who was the first of the provincials to obtain a triumph.

Latin literature, for the reason that the provincials of the West, the South, and the North had no native literature which could occasion a new and fruitful current in the national literature, such as were inspired in France, at different epochs, by Lopez de Vega, Shakespeare, and Goethe. Bringing nothing from their own provinces, they became the pupils of their masters, seeking to draw from a dried-up spring. The best writers of the time, until as late as the middle of the second century, Tacitus, Juvenal, and the elder and younger Pliny, were all Romans.[1]

Public offices were also invaded: Gallio the Spaniard had command in Achaia, Vindex the Aquitanian in Lugdunensis, the Greek Florus in Judæa, the Jew Alexander in Egypt. The people of the provinces took very much in earnest their right of keeping watch upon the administration of the imperial magistrates, and the prosperity or disgrace of noble families at Rome depended upon the thanks or the complaints which, in behalf of his province, some islander or some Bithynian brought to the city. A governor of the Cyrenaica, accused by the inhabitants, was expelled from the senate. Timarchus the Cretan boasted that he could cause the proconsuls who ruled his island to be recompensed or punished as he chose.

The old Roman party, who always regarded the provincials as conquered and subjects, were offended at their taking part in public affairs. Thrasea, in the senate, and Tacitus, in his history, made themselves the organs of its resentment. "Formerly," the historian represents the orator as saying, "the nations trembled before us, awaiting the decisions of one man, prætor, proconsul, or mere deputy, from the senate. Now it is we who carry our homage and our adulation to them. The meanest of them decrees thanks, or more frequently accusations, concerning us. Accordingly, each administration begins with firmness and ends feebly, our proconsuls now no longer being severe judges, but rather candidates who solicit the popular suffrage." Not daring to take away from the

[1] I am well aware of the deficiencies of the two Plinys, and, on the other hand, I grant that Lucan, in the matter of style, is often a great writer, that Martial has wit, Persius strength, and Quintilian uncommon accuracy; but at the risk of being accused of a historian's partiality for his own science, I would willingly relinquish them all to the professed student of literature, and retain four authors who at least teach me something of man, of Roman society, and of ancient science.

provincials the right of claiming justice, he desired to prohibit them from asking for rewards. A senatus-consultum proposed by the emperor, and doubtless drafted by Seneca—that provincial so unpopular in the provinces—forbad the local assemblies to concern themselves in future with questions of that kind. Thus was mutilated an ancient right, which, on the contrary, should have been extended under a new form. Happily, however, this decree quickly fell into desuetude, being abolished upon Nero's death.

The provincials were busy, then, laying out roads, building bridges, cultivating the soil, and disputing with native-born Romans the honours of literature and even the functions of the State. No doubt many of their great cities aped Rome, and life in them was no better than in the capital. But Tacitus speaks of the old Italian manners still preserved in the depths of the Apennines, and shows us the embarrassment of the provincial deputies who were present, with shame, at Nero's theatrical representations.[1] In the camps especially, among the legions who, since the days of Augustus, had been kept in the presence of danger and of the barbarians, discipline, courage, and the habit of severe labour, had been preserved. Thus is explained this contrast of insane rulers but of an Empire at peace. The supremacy of Rome was so needful that it maintained itself. Up to that time the ancient world had lived under the rule of force. Notwithstanding much of tyranny and much of cruelty, it was now coming under the control of law, and its gratitude was not transient.

The first military events of Nero's reign had their theatre in the East. Since the year 54 A.D. the Parthians under Vologeses had been occupying Armenia; prompt and energetic measures, namely, the filling up of the legions of Syria; the concession to the chiefs of Lesser Armenia and Sophene of the title of king, in order to secure their fidelity; the building of bridges over the Euphrates; the sending of Corbulo into the East, and the putting forward of a rival to Vologeses, decided this king to give hostages;[2] but his brother Tiridates still remained in possession of Armenia. Corbulo, hampered by the rivalry of Ummidius Quadratus, the

[1] *Ann.*, xvi. 5. See in vol. v. chap. lxxxiii.

[2] Tac., *Ann.*, xiii. 8, 9. In respect to the Armenian wars, see the careful work of Egli, in the *Untersuchungen* of Max Büdinger, Zurich, 1868.

governor of Syria, who had been associated with him, and still more by the disorganization of the army of the East, had not been able to do more. Being left alone in the command by his colleague's death, he employed three years in restoring discipline, which a lengthened residence in the effeminate Syrian cities had impaired among the troops. He sent home the veterans, obtained a legion from Germany, with Galatian and Cappadocian auxiliaries, and retained them all in tents, even during the winter, preaching by example as well as by word, labouring himself, bare-headed, in the entrenchments. When he was sure of his legions, and, moreover, saw Vologeses occupied by an insurrection in his eastern provinces, he invaded Armenia, baffled the intrigues and defeated the attacks of Tiridates, and made himself master of the capital, Artaxata, which he set on fire. With extreme fatigues, he made his way from the valley of the Araxes into that of the Tigris, and captured Tigranocerta. He had thus twice traversed almost the whole of Armenia, and this kingdom appeared to be conquered; Tigranes, the grandson of a former king of Cappadocia, was sent from Rome to take command of it, and Corbulo left to the new prince some of his own troops. "To render the administration less difficult," says Tacitus, "Corbulo gave to his allies, the kings of Iberia, Pontus, Lesser Armenia, and Commagene, the Armenian districts bordering on their respective states (60 A.D.)[1]

Corbulo (Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Philosophers, No. 48).

But Tigranes, just escaping from the luxurious life of Rome, to play the conqueror, had the audacity to provoke the Parthians by invading Adiabene. At the news of this outrage, Vologeses, urged by his chief men, abandoned the war in Hyrcania, and

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 23-26.

made formidable preparations against Tigranes. Even Corbulo took alarm at this national outburst, and asked for a second general to defend Armenia while he himself upon the Euphrates would meet the main attack of the barbarians. But this division of forces brought disaster. Corbulo did indeed prevent the Parthians from invading Syria, but Cæsennius Pætus, who was in command in Armenia, allowed himself to be defeated and shut up in his camp with what remained of two legions. His courage and patience being quickly exhausted, he negotiated with Vologeses, promised to withdraw from Armenia, and brought back into Cappadocia his disgraced standards (62 A.D.). This defeat enhanced the fame of Corbulo, and after holding counsel with the chief senators, Nero invested Corbulo with powers almost as extensive as had been those of Pompey against Mithridates. Augustus and Tiberius intrusted these great powers only to princes of the imperial family; but the palace was empty around Nero; not a person of the Julian family remained alive: hence he was compelled to resort to a parvenu soldier, who soon also became an object of suspicion. Corbulo was not obliged to fight: Vologeses sued for peace and upon the very scene of his recent triumphs; and the Roman, forgetting Tigranes, his late *protégé*, promised to recognize

Tiridates, King of Armenia (Museum of the Louvre, No. 446).

Tiridates, if the brother of the Parthian king would, in the presence of the legions, lay aside his diadem, and then go to Rome to accept from the hands of Nero the crown of Armenia (63 A.D.).[1]

Armenias.[2]

The Empire thus retained its advantages, Armenia remaining a subject state, as Augustus and Tiberius had desired, and as the security of the Asiatic provinces demanded. A Parthian war was always unpopular at Rome; since the time of Crassus and Antony it had always caused uneasiness. The success of Corbulo, therefore, caused general rejoicing, and coins of the year bear a representation of the altar of peace.[3]

It had been possible without risk to withdraw, for this war, troops from Pannonia and the banks of the Rhine, for all along that frontier prevailed a profound peace never once impaired during this reign. Plautius Ælianus, the first conqueror of Britain under Claudius, commanded in Mœsia. This skilful general, deprived of part of his forces, which had been called away by Corbulo, nevertheless caused the Roman name to be held in respect upon the Danube. He treated with the Bastarnæ and the Roxolani, and required many kings, till then unknown to the Romans, to come into his camp to pay homage to the standards of the legions and the portraits of the emperor. He even carried his authority far beyond the limits of Mœsia, forcing the Scythians to raise the siege of a town situated beyond the Borysthenes, and he instructed the Roman officers how to obtain great quantities of corn from those countries where nature so liberally provides the sources of an inexhaustible fertility. The right bank of the Danube having been depopulated, he transported thither 100,000 barbarians, taking care to disperse them in separate villages and mingle them with Roman colonists, in order to habituate them to the arts of peace. The prosperity of these lately desolate regions was rapid; a century and a half

Kneeling Parthian, presenting a Standard.[4]

The Altar of Peace (Bronze Coin).

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, xv. 24-32. This coronation did not, however, occur until the year 66.

[2] Victory holding a palm and a wreath. Silver coin commemorating the victories in Armenia.

[3] Eckhel, *Doctr. num.*, vi. 268; Cohen, i. *Nero*, n. 86-90, and Supplement N., n. 9-13.

[4] Reverse of a silver coin of the Petronian family, one of whom was consul under Nero.

later all the strength of the Empire seemed to have taken refuge there.[1]

In the valley of the middle Danube, the Suevi of Moravia remained peaceful, and the Marcomanni had not rallied from their disasters. Further up the river the work of colonizing went on in the *agri decumates*, which lay about the head waters of the great river, and in Helvetia. Thus the legions of Upper Germany saw no enemies, and those of the lower Rhine had only now and then some skirmish on the outposts. On one occasion some Frisians undertook to make a settlement upon lands lying unoccupied and unclaimed; and a few of the auxiliary cavalry were enough to drive them out. Upon this they sent to Rome to ask permission to establish themselves upon the lands in question. While in Rome, being taken to the theatre, they saw, seated upon the senatorial benches, individuals in foreign costume. "These are deputies," they were told, "of brave and faithful nations, to whom the emperor grants this honour." "There are none more brave and more faithful than the Germans," they rejoined, and, amid the applause of all present, they went to sit beside them.

Notwithstanding their protestations of devotion, their request was denied. Shortly after, a more powerful tribe, the Ansibarii, driven out by the Chauci, solicited an establishment on the banks of the Rhine. Their chief was an old warrior who had served under Tiberius and under Germanicus. He came, he said, to crown an attachment which had lasted fifty years, by putting his nation under the authority of Rome. As in the case of the Frisians, they were harshly bidden to retire, and upon information that they were forming an alliance with the neighbouring tribes, the legions were set in motion. At the mere rumour of their advance the whole region at once became quiet. The Ansibarii, thus left alone, fell back, begging an asylum everywhere, which was on all sides refused them, as if the wrath of Rome pursued them into the very heart of Germany. They wandered in poverty and distress among the Usipii and the Tubantes, and then among the Catti and Cherusci, marking their road with the bones of their

[1] Upon the tomb of the Plautii, at the Ponte Lucano, near Tivoli, can still be read the very interesting epitaph of Plautius Ælianus, relating his services and the honours that he received. Cf. Orelli, No. 750.

chiefs, so that soon there appeared to be nothing left of the once powerful tribe, and Tacitus believed it destroyed.[1] It was destined, however, to re-appear later; and under the formidable name of Franks, the Ansibarii presently entered as conquerors the Roman world, in which they had once presented themselves as suppliants.

To drive back the Germans from the left bank of the Rhine was good policy, if it did not have the effect of creating a desert between Gaul and the barbarians. In denying themselves peaceful conquests, they prevented that radiating influence of Roman civilization which would have awakened industry, trade, and social life on the right bank of the river, a more secure barrier than the belt of depopulated country into which the bravest of the barbarians were sure to hasten so soon as they became conscious that the sword of Cæsar, of Drusus, Germanicus and Tiberius was beginning to tremble in the hand of the Empire. But Augustus had said there must be no more war with the Germans. To encourage their quarrels was esteemed the better policy; and, from the Roman entrenchments upon the Rhine and the Danube, to watch their internecine conflicts as, in the amphitheatre, the combats of gladiators. "This summer," says Tacitus (58 A.D.), "the Hermanduri and the Catti had a great battle, the latter being defeated. Both parties had agreed to devote to Mars and Mercury the conquered army. Conformably to this vow, men and horses and all that belonged to the Catti were exterminated. Thus the barbarians turned their fury upon each other." Elsewhere he says: "The Bructeri were driven out and annihilated by a league of neighbouring nations, whom a hatred of their pride, the desire of plunder, and perhaps the special favour of the gods towards us, had raised up against them. We were not even refused by heaven the sight of the combat. Sixty thousand barbarians fell, not beneath the sword of the Romans, but—a thing more to be admired—before their eyes and for their gratification. May it be that the nations, if they have no love for Rome, shall at least persevere in this hatred of one another, since fortune has henceforth nothing more to offer us than the disasters of our enemies."[2]

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, xiii. 54-56.
[2] *Ibid.*, 57, and *Germ.*, 33.

With this policy of peace, there remained to the generals no other means of attracting the emperor's attention than to employ their troops in useful labours. Corbulo set the example of this under Claudius; two of Nero's lieutenants undertook, one, to finish the dike commenced sixty-three years before by Drusus, to keep back the Rhine; the other, to cut the plateau of Langres, to connect the Moselle with the Saône. This latter undertaking failed through the jealousy of the governor of Belgica, and for eighteen hundred years no one dared carry into execution the grand conception of the Roman general.[1]

Mercury (Museum of Lyons).[2]

In Britain the limits of the Roman possessions were somewhat ill-defined; neither the northern nor the western parts of the island were subdued. Under Didius Gallus and under Veranius, his successor, there were constant difficulties. To make an end of these troubles, Suetonius Paulinus, the rival in military renown of Corbulo, decided to cross the western mountains and lay hands upon the very sanctuary of the Druidic faith, the island of Mona (Anglesey), where sat the high college of priests, and whence issued exhortations, and counsels,

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, xiii. 53. The canal making a junction between the Saône and the Moselle is now completed.

[2] Statuette of dark green bronze. (Comarmond, *Descript.*, etc., pl. 8, No. 61.)

and plans of revolt.[1] The island is separated from Britain by a narrow channel, and the soldiers hesitated for a moment when they saw on the opposite shore a crowd of Druids, among whom women ran about, like Furies, in funeral dress, with streaming hair, and waving lighted torches. Meanwhile the Druids, with hands raised to heaven, pronounced horrible imprecations. The conflict was, however, speedily terminated; the venerable forests of the Druids were cut down, and their rude altars, whereon they sought, from the entrails of human victims, to learn the will of Hesus and Taranis, were broken to pieces by the legionaries. This was the last stand made by the Druids against the power of Rome.

At the same moment a revolt broke out in the rear of the army. The king of the Iceni had bequeathed to Nero half his possessions. Burdensome taxes, notwithstanding, were laid upon his people, who were also urged to great extravagances, for which Roman bankers furnished the funds at ruinous rates, Seneca being, by the testimony of Dion, one of these pitiless usurers. The king of the Iceni had believed his family at least secured by his gift to the emperor; but his wife Boadicea and his two daughters were notwithstanding subjected to the most brutal violence. In the absence of Suetonius, the centurions and veterans of Camulodunum (Colchester) committed excesses of every kind, driving the Britons from their houses and fields, and treating them as captives rather than as subjects. These disorders did not extend beyond the territory of the new colony; but Decianus, the procurator, oppressed the whole province; and a swarm of Italians and provincials came down upon it, who seized upon all that the country produced, more especially the lead and tin of the mines, sending these metals over into Gaul in great quantities. More than 100,000 foreigners were already established in Britain, so quickly did Roman civilization extend over the territory opened to it. Londinium, on the Tamesis, was already the central mart of an extensive commerce; Verulamium[2] was hardly inferior to it in wealth; many other cities were growing up with the institutions and manners of Italy: Camulodunum was distinguished by a temple and priesthood of

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 29; *Agric.*, 14. [The details which follow savour of romance.—*Ed.*]

[2] Near St. Albans.

"the divine Claudius." It was but eighteen years before that the legions had landed in the island. This invasion in time of peace, these foreign customs, this taking possession of Britain by a strange people, roused the eastern tribes even more than did the exactions of procurators and the rapacity of usurers.[1] Boadicea put herself at their head; Camulodunum was taken and burned; a legion partly destroyed; London and Verulam seized, and their inhabitants, men, women, and children, put to the sword or crucified. Eighty thousand allies or citizens perished.[2]

Suetonius, hastening from the island of Mona, had been able to gather only 10,000 men. He offered battle, however, to the immense army of barbarians, through whose ranks Boadicea rode in her chariot, her two daughters by her side, calling upon them to avenge her honour and their own liberty. "To-day," she cried, "we conquer, or we die; and I will set you the example." The battle was such as it must have been, with a general and soldiers like those who, that day, defended the cause of Rome. There remained dead upon the battle-field, it is said, about 80,000 barbarians, men and women, for the Britons had brought their wives with them to behold their victory. Boadicea kept her word, dying by poison upon the battle-field. The province at once fell back under the yoke (61 A.D.).[3] But Suetonius lost his command. Denounced at Rome by the imperial procurator on account of his severity, he beheld one of Nero's freedmen sent out to examine into his conduct; and the illustrious general was recalled on the report of a man who had been a slave (61 A.D.).

The Roman legions thus maintained their ancient fame in the West as well as in the East; and, thanks to their courage, the Empire might have been believed still under the direction of its early chiefs. But this skill and moderation in the imperial government was due entirely to two men, Burrus and Seneca. Of these the former died in 62, not without suspicion of poison; and Nero appointed as his successor the corrupt Sophonius Tigellinus. Rendered anxious by his isolated position, Seneca desired to quit

[1] According to Dion, lxii. 2, the cause of the revolt was a claim, made by Seneca, of 10,000,000 denarii, and the repayment of a loan sanctioned by Claudius.

[2] Dion, lxii. 1; Tacitus (*Ann.*, xiv. 33) says "more than 70,000."

[3] Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 29-40; *Agric.*, 16. Suetonius says (*Nero*, 18) that the emperor thought for a time of abandoning the province, which is hardly credible.

the court and give up his immense wealth to his master; but the latter considered this a slur upon his friendship and refused to part with the philosopher. Seneca, however, while still keeping his possessions, dismissed his followers, closed his house, and, under pretext of studious pursuits, separated himself from public affairs.[1] But it was too soon and too late; especially, too late. With Burrus dead and Seneca no longer in power, tyranny broke loose. If it had already shown itself by terrible signs, it had at least struck at long intervals; now that Tigellinus and Poppæa were supreme at court, we come back to the frenzies and cruelties of Caligula. It is not that Nero had changed. He was kept in check before; he was stimulated now, and his first excesses brought on others still greater. Tigellinus had been appointed prætorian prefect with Fænius Rufus; this division of authority gave him but half the place of Burrus, and to secure the whole he flattered the caprices and dislikes of the emperor. He asserted that Sylla, who had been banished to Marseilles, and Plautus, to Asia, were endeavouring to incite to insurrection the armies of the Rhine and the Euphrates. Nero sent for their heads; the one was killed at table, and the other while employed in his customary exercises of the gymnasium.[3]

Laurelled Nero.[2]

To seal his alliance with Poppæa, Tigellinus urged Nero to divorce Octavia, and a pretext of adultery with an Egyptian slave was manufactured. The freedmen of the empress were put to the torture; some gave way before the severity of their sufferings, but most of them remained firm, one of them retorting upon Tigellinus with a terrible answer.[4] The divorce was nevertheless pronounced, and Octavia, removed from the palace and then from Rome, was sent away under a guard of soldiers into Campania. The populace who, for the fate of the Empire, and for the life or death of the nobles usually felt the most complete

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 51–56.
[2] Great bronze of the *Cabinet de France*.
[3] Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 57–59.
[4] *Ibid.*, 60–64.

indifference, and especially the women, who regarded conjugal infidelity as far more shocking than any civil crime, were much attached to this daughter of Claudius, whose mother and father and brother had been murdered, and who, at the age of twenty, was now driven from her throne by a woman of the vilest character. When news of this spread through the streets of Rome murmurs began to be heard, not secretly, as among the ex-consuls, but quite loudly—the people could venture further than the nobles, having less to fear than they. Nero was far from brave; he took the alarm, and Octavia was recalled. At once the crowd flocked rejoicing to the Capitol, thanking the gods; they overthrew Poppæa's statues and covered those of Octavia with flowers, and, for the first time in very many years making a riot in the name of outraged morality, they made their way into the palace with cries of hatred and contempt for the new empress. But soldiers armed with whips appeared upon the scene, and the servile crowd made a cowardly retreat.

Poppæa (Museum of the Louvre).

The vengeance of Poppæa was terrible. The information obtained from Octavia's women had been of a character to convict no one. It became necessary to devise an infamous scheme. Anicetus, that prefect of the fleet who had assassinated Agrippina, was a man capable of anything; he was summoned, and was told that he must rid the emperor of his wife, as lately he had freed his imperial master of a mother. This time, however, it was not

to be done by a bold stroke or crafty thrust of dagger. The prefect was to avow himself Octavia's lover and then submit to a mild exile. Great wealth was promised him as a reward, and it was certain that death would be the penalty of refusal. Anicetus did not hesitate; he loudly boasted of Octavia's favours, then disappeared from Rome, sent to enjoy opulent infamy in Sardinia. Nero at once publicly accused Octavia, not only of infidelity, but of an intrigue with Anicetus to excite mutiny in the fleet at Misenum; she was banished to the island of Pandataria, whither a sentence of death shortly followed her. The unhappy young woman had not the stoical courage which the times required; she was reluctant to die; her tears and entreaties, however, did not change the centurion's firmness; her veins were opened, but terror had so chilled her blood that it did not flow, and the assassins ended by smothering her in a hot bath. Her head was carried to Rome and given to Poppæa, as was the custom, that it might be made certain that the sentence had been fulfilled.

There were others almost equally guilty with the three chief conspirators in this infamous tragedy: the senate, to thank the gods for saving Nero from the machinations of Octavia, decreed that public offerings should be made in all the temples. In those days senators were baser than proletarii.

A number of freedmen were shortly after this put to death, Poppæa being desirous to renew the imperial household. Doryphorus was poisoned because he had opposed the marriage; Pallas, on account of his enormous wealth;[1] Seneca, even, was made uneasy by an accusation. The birth of a daughter about this time greatly increased Poppæa's favour with the emperor. To celebrate the event the senate voted temples and gladiatorial combats. But scarcely were the rejoicings ended when the infant died, and Nero's grief was as extreme as his joy. The Conscript Fathers consoled him by making his daughter a goddess.

In this fickle and violent nature no impression lasted long. Unworthy pleasures and shameful debauchery came next, and his passion for the theatre again asserting itself, he hastened to Naples

[1] Dion (lxiv. 14) and Suetonius (*Nero*, 35) have no doubt of this. Tacitus, for once more reserved, says only: *creditus est* (*Ann.*, xiv. 65).

to give the populace the pleasure of hearing that divine voice which hitherto had charmed the courtiers only. This experiment seems not to have been very successful, for he began to talk of going over into Achaia—the Greeks being the only people who knew how to listen, he said. He took great pains, however, to drill his audience. Certain young knights, with a troop of 500 plebeians, divided into cohorts and trained in the proper methods of applauding, followed him wherever he went. They were called the *Augustiani*, and their leaders had a salary of 40,000 sesterces.[1] The Roman populace, fearing for their subsistence if the ruler were away, detained him in the city: the head of the Empire was for them, principally, the person in charge of supplies. Nero, who was besides prevented from going by an evil omen, remained in the city, and manifested his gratitude for a popularity whose motives he misjudged. He went upon the stage in Rome itself and sang to the assembled populace. The senate, in the hope of preventing this disgrace, decreed him the prizes in advance; but he would not have it. "I have no need," he said, "either to canvass or to accept the senate's vote; I desire to contend on an equal footing with my rivals, and to receive nothing but what is justly my due." And he did, in fact, submit himself to all the

Nero Citharædus.[2]

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 15; Suet., *Nero*, 25; Dion, lxi. 20.

[2] Statue found upon the Esquiline (Vatican, *Museo Pio-Clem.*, iii. pl. 4).

rules imposed upon the public singer of that time: not to sit down, not to cough or spit, not to wipe his brow except with a corner of his robe, and after he had done singing, to bend the knee and stretch out his hand towards the audience, and, with a timid air, ask for the decision of the judges. But no man was safe to trust to this attitude of humility, for the law of treason, and informers, and soldiers posted among the benches, watched over the vain artist, and it was a crime to applaud badly or seem indifferent. Vespasian narrowly escaped with his life for having fallen asleep a moment during these performances which lasted for days.

Nero singing.[1]

At other times Nero made the public places of Rome scenes of infamous orgies. The story of the banquet of Tigellinus on the banks of Agrippa's pond is told by Tacitus,[2] but we may not relate it, even from that grave and serious author. To the same effect is the testimony of Petronius, an author who may be read but not quoted. We must desist from the attempt to depict this frantic world, these heirs of Cato and of Brutus, intoxicated with prosperity and wealth and empire; forgetful of a past which they could not comprehend; careless of a future which they had no desire to penetrate, believing as they did in the power of a fate which marched irresistibly onward; and all the more eager to enjoy and to use in the most exciting debauchery the present moment, of which alone they felt sure. Fashioned in slime and blood, as was said of Tiberius, these men trifled alike with life and death, with honour and shame; garlanded with flowers, they poured out poison; between two pleasures there was a murder; the fatal blow was given without remorse and received almost without regret, as when a drunken revel is over the wearied guests break the glasses and fall exhausted upon the floor.

[1] PONTIF. MAX. TR. P. IMP. PP. SC. Nero, laurel-crowned, in a long robe, standing, singing and accompanying himself on the lyre. Medium bronze.

[2] *Ann.*, xv. 37; cf. Dion, lxii. 23; lxiii. 13.

III.—The Burning of Rome; the Christians.

Fortunately for the world, in the shadow of this palace where dwelt shameless pleasure, in the midst of this very Rome which the Apostle calls "the great harlot which did corrupt the earth with her fornication," there was growing up a new people whose faith and morals were directly opposed to those of Rome, replacing sensual pleasures by the mortification of the flesh, the cares of earth by a love of heaven, the pursuit of life by that of death. Never had doctrines and manners more contrasted been brought together; a mortal strife was inevitable, in which one or the other must perish, and it was fitting that the most depraved representative of pagan sensuality should begin the warfare.

In the middle of the year 64 A.D. a fire which lasted nine days destroyed ten out of the fourteen *regiones* of Rome. This was the severest disaster that had happened to the city since the Gallic invasion;[1] and what the barbarians then destroyed was but a crowd of miserable dwelling-houses and a few poor temples. Now, what masterpieces of Greek art, what monuments of Roman history were consumed! Poets and rhetoricians, whose art it is to substitute living agents for unknown or hidden causes, have without hesitation accused Nero. Fascination for the diabolical grandeur of the whim might have seized upon the imperial actor—to burn his capital and rebuild it again according to his own taste, to destroy all the records of ancient Rome, in order to fill new Rome with himself alone. They show him to us, while the fire was doing its work, standing upon the tower of Mæcenas on the summit of the Palatine, the better to observe the vast destruction, and there, in theatrical costume, lyre in hand, singing his verses on the burning of Troy, while soldiers of the prætorian guard and slaves of the imperial household aided the progress of the fire, and machines and catapults were kept ready to throw down walls which seemed to offer obstacles. It would be a gratification to let the poets retain their Babylonian festival and leave Nero his crime. But Tacitus,

[1] The fire broke out in the night of the 18th–19th of July, the anniversary of the taking of Rome by the Gauls; it lasted six days and seven nights, and broke out again at intervals for three days more.

who was probably in the city at that time, relates the accusing rumours, but does not confirm them; and his whole account makes it probable that this fire, which in a hot and windy night of July began among some oil stores in the trading part[1] of the city, was the result of one of these accidents so frequent in Rome, where fires, like malaria, were the habitual scourge. Nero was living at this time in his villa at Antium, fifteen or sixteen leagues distant, and when he reached Rome his own palace had already been consumed. He went about the city all night without his guards,[2] directing the efforts of the people to stop the fire, and on the following days opened to the houseless crowd the buildings of Agrippa and his own gardens. Sheds were hastily erected to shelter the most needy, furniture was brought from Ostia and adjacent towns, and the price of corn was reduced to three sesterces the modius.

Port of Ostia.[3]

However, as the poor had really suffered much, and as the crowd always require a culprit, the emperor was held responsible for the fire, as he had been for the previous famine. Besides this, there were persons interested in propagating damaging rumours to destroy Nero's popularity with the lower classes: the conspiracy of Piso was in full career, and those ex-consuls who were seen,[4] it was said, in the midst of the crowd, exciting the public fury, were no doubt acting in the interests of that conspiracy. By an ingenious turn, the government directed public suspicion into another channel, and supplied victims for the popular anger by accusing the Christians of having set fire to the city.

This new sect was by the crowd confused with that of the Jews. Whether Christian or Jew they were seen to pray in the

[1] *Initium in ea parte Circi . . . . . ubi per tabernas, quibus id mercimonium inerat quo flamma alitur, simul cœptus ignis et statim validus ac vento citus* (Tac., *Ann.*, xv. 38). Tacitus was eight or nine years old at this time (Borghesi, vii. 322).

[2] *Huc illuc per noctem cursaret-incustoditus* (Tac., *Ann.*, xv. 50).

[3] AVGVST. SC. POR. OST. Large bronze of Nero, representing the circuit of the walls of Ostia and seven vessels within. Nero repaired or perhaps finished this port.

[4] After the discovery of the plot, one of the conspirators, questioned by Nero himself, answered: "I hate you, as a parricide and an incendiary." (Tac., *Ann.*, xv. 67. Cf. Statius, *Silv.*, ii. 7.)

synagogues and to worship the same God, from whom they had received the same sign of their election, that baptism of blood whose scar was yet borne by many among the Christians as well as by the Jews.[1] At Rome, where they were not numerous,[2] they lived in the same quarter with the Jews, a kind of Ghetto, a region of small shops and hovels, where the fire very likely began. They were, however, separated from them by the faith in Christ and in the resurrection,[3] and by the more liberal spirit of their teaching,

[1] The Council of Jerusalem had not forbidden the observance of the old law (50 A.D.). S. Paul, who had taught the doctrine of evangelical liberty, subjected Timothy to circumcision for the reason that "the Jews of the country would not have listened to the instructions of an uncircumcised person." (Fleury, *Hist. eccles.*, i. 34.) S. Paul makes mention of the fact (*Philipp.*, iii. 5) that he had been circumcised.

[2] It would be very erroneous to believe that at this time there were in Rome any considerable number of Jews or Christians. Of the former, there had been at Rome in the reign of Tiberius about 8,000 men, not counting women and children (Josephus, *Ant. Jud.*, xvii. 3, 1, and xviii. 3, 5); of these half were banished to Sardinia, and the rest expelled from the city, whither, naturally, they only returned but slowly, being always liable to the decree of expulsion. In the reign of Caligula they had everything to fear (see p. 385), notwithstanding the favour enjoyed by Agrippa, a Jewish prince. They, however, came back to Rome, attracted by the profits to be made in the great city, and under Claudius were again expelled (see p. 407, and the *Acts of the Apostles*, xviii. 2). Under Nero, therefore, they could not have become very numerous. To make converts was not easy for them; they had some "proselytes of the gate," who, from a distance, listened to the prayers in the synagogue; but their "proselytes of the law" were very few, inasmuch as it was very seldom that any pagan was willing to submit to the ceremonial law of circumcision. As regards the Christians, chiefly recruited at this time from among the poor, hardly any of them had been in a position to make the long and expensive journey to Rome in the thirty-one years that had passed since the crucifixion of Christ, and their missionary efforts, however active, had not had time to produce any extensive results. It appears from the *Acts of the Apostles* (xxviii. 15 *et sq.*) that, on the arrival of S. Paul in Rome in the year 62, the chief men of the Roman synagogue were extremely ignorant in respect to the new faith (*Acts*, xxviii. 17 *et sq.*), and that "the brethren" who came out to meet Paul upon the Appian Way must have been few in number, since the small escort, with its large company of foreign prisoners on the way to the prætorian prefect, considered it safe to allow communication. Seneca appears not to have heard of them (S. Augustine, *de Civ. Dei*, VI. ii.), and Persius, enumerating the foreign religions established at Rome in Nero's time (*Sat.*, v. 179), mentions only Jews, priests of Cybele, and those of Isis. Wherever the Jews had established themselves, and every great merchant city had its colony of them, there might Christians be found also. S. Paul met them in Puteoli (*Acts*, xxviii. 14), and it has been asserted that a half-illegible word scrawled in charcoal on a wall in Pompeii was no other than *Christianus*—a conjecture possible, but not probable. The punishments of the year 64 A.D., ordered in a very public manner on a *fête* day, left in men's minds such a terror as to justify the language of Tacitus, of Clement, and of the *Apocalypse*, in respect to the number of victims, although it was not really very great. Even at Jerusalem the Christian community was so feeble and obscure that Josephus does not mention it in his enumeration of the religious parties existing in the city; and Justus of Tiberias, who also wrote a history of the siege, does not appear to have mentioned them (Photius, *Biblioth.*, 33).

[3] The doctrine of the resurrection, which is singularly veiled in the books of the Old Testament, was, however, accepted by the Pharisees; but the other great Jewish party, the Sadducees, rejected it (*Acts*, xxiii. 8).

of which S. Paul, in his teaching at Rome and in his epistles, especially in that general epistle entitled πρὸς Ῥωμαίους, had made himself the representative. But as they had neither canonical books,[1] episcopal organization, or councils to state the dogma precisely or to maintain it, that belief, still in the condition of a legend orally transmitted, had something undecided and vague about it, which, on account of that very quality, was more easily spread than a narrow and rigid formula. The new ideas, under Christian or Jewish form, made a few converts from time to time, because they responded to the secret aspirations of lofty souls, which failed to be satisfied by the barrenness of the State religion or the haughty philosophy of Zeno. They even penetrated into the palace of the prince. Josephus relates that he was introduced to the presence of Poppæa by an actor who was held by Nero in great esteem. Of high birth among his own people, very accomplished, above all, subtle and insinuating, Josephus won the good graces of Poppæa, who, like many women, not only of her day, but of all time, mingled her religion with pleasure. "She had," he said, "a very religious nature,"[2] by which we may understand that, in spite of her heartlessness, this woman was troubled in the depths of her soul by the great problem which was then stirring. The old gods were dying; she sought a new god, and many were like her, among them Acte, the first love of Nero, many of whose freedmen, by the witness of the inscriptions upon their tombs, had become Christians. Pomponia Græcina, a severe matron, who wore only the garb of mourning and was never seen to smile, was accused of foreign superstitions, and probably was either a Christian or Jewess.[3] Consequently, in the midst of Roman society, in the highest rank, their existed a leaven of beliefs hostile to the

[1] S. Paul, for instance, quotes no Gospel, and the Apostolical Epistles do not suggest their existence.

[2] Θεοσεβὴς γὰρ ἦν (*Vit. Jos.*, 3). It must be acknowledged that she was extremely superstitious. Tacitus (*Hist.*, i. 22) describes her as given over to astrologers and charlatans: *Multos secreta Poppææ mathematicos habuerant.*

[3] Tac., *Ann.*, xiii. 32. See chap. lxxxvi. § vi. The Jews, as after them the Christians, strove to convert the women to their doctrines. The inhabitants of Damascus formed a plan to slaughter all Jews dwelling among them; but absolute secrecy was necessary to their success, because, as Josephus says (*Bell. Jud.*, ii. 20), almost all the women in the town belonged to the Jewish sect. Cf. S. Paul, *ad Rom.*, chap. xvi.; Pliny, *Epist.*, x. 97. M. Derenbourg (*History of Palestine*, p. 223) is of the opinion that this was true also in Batanæa, Adiabene, etc.

old religion. They were silent forces and hidden in darkness. There was, however, a consciousness abroad that they were secretly at work, and not a few dreaded the wrath of the gods, sure to be irritated by such blasphemous preaching. For both Jews and Christians in their canticles showered their curses upon pagan idolatry, and enough was understood to make it clear that Rome, her gods and her Empire, were the object of their religious execration. How could those who were familiar with Greek interpret these words of Isaiah: "He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak; he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it. He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied; yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, 'Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire;' and the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image; he falleth down unto it and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, 'Deliver me; for thou art my God.'"

In spite of the foreign idiom [and in their Greek dress in the *Septuagint*], the threats of these prophecies spread abroad: "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree. Yet he passed away, and lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.—Jehovah has smitten the wicked and the sceptre of rulers. He smote the people in his wrath with a continual stroke.—How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cast down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend unto heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation; they that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms?—I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of hosts, and cut off their name, their land shall become desolate; the owls shall dwell therein." The Scriptures are full of threatenings against the tyrants of that Babylon which can be so easily interpreted as Rome, and the one only God speaks in every page of his omnipotence, which is to overthrow that of the divinities of Olympus.

For political reasons, and also through scorn of so insignificant

a race, Rome had tolerated a religion directly contradictory to her own. But this sect, which had recently come out of Judæa—with its secret meetings, suggestive of criminal practices, whose adoration of a man that had died on the cross, heretofore the punishment of slaves, seemed a revolutionary menace—gave rise to violent hatred. Even Tacitus and Suetonius, in the age of the Antonines, when the Christians were better understood, did not fail to speak of them still in words of scorn.[1] "These wretches," said Tacitus, "abhorred for their infamy, derived their name from Christ, who suffered death in the reign of Tiberius. His death checked for awhile this dangerous superstition. But it revived soon after in Judæa, the place of its origin, and even in Rome, the asylum which receives and protects the vices and crimes of the entire world."[2] After the fire, a few voices declared the Christians to be guilty of the calamity. That was sufficient for a crowd, maddened by a great catastrophe,[3] to rush at once upon those whom they already knew to be the enemies of their gods, and who always absented themselves from their festivals and amusements. But whence came these hostile voices? From the people, who for a long time had been retorting upon them the scorn in which they held other nations;[4] perhaps some of their own number, within the palace, were responsible for this turn of opinion. The hatred with which the sectaries of the old dispensation persecuted those of the new is well known.[5] The preaching of S. Paul had aroused this feeling within the Jewish communion at Rome, and those slaves or freedmen who had been converted by him horrified those Jews, who, in favour with Poppæa, had been received by the emperor on terms of familiarity.[6] Nor is it

[1] . . . . *per flagitia invisos* (*Ann.*, xv. 44). *Christiani, genus hominum superstitionis novæ ac maleficæ* (Suet., *Nero*, 16).

[2] *Ann.*, xv. 44.

[3] At the first appearance of the cholera in Paris, in 1832, the frenzied populace fancied it to be the result of poison, and several persons were beaten or thrown into the Seine as poisoners.

[4] *Adversus omnes alios hostile odium* (Tac., *Hist.*, v. 5). The phrase of Tacitus (*Ann.*, xv. 44) in regard to the Christians, commonly translated, "enemies of the human race," ought rather to read: "condemned by the hatred of the human race."

[5] The stoning of S. Stephen at Jerusalem, S. Paul threatened with death, etc. Add to these the internal divisions of the new Church, and the opposition of the Jewish Christians and the followers of Paul, to which so many passages in the *Epistles* and in the *Apocalypse* testify.

[6] *Ep. Philip. ad finem.* S. Clement (*Epist. ad Cor.*, I. iii. 5 and 6) attributes this persecution to jealousy.

impossible that they imagined they were rendering a service both to Nero and themselves, by pointing out as authors of the crime those Christians who were said to take delight in the idea of celestial vengeance, universal conflagration, and the final destruction of the world. Nor is it wholly unreasonable to believe that although the *Apocalypse*, which bears witness to an intense hatred against the Roman commonwealth, was as yet unwritten, nevertheless, the apocalyptic spirit, with its zeal for destruction and for an entire renovation of the world, existed already in the Church.[1]

If this were a pre-concerted plan, it was well carried out and of a character to deceive every one. At first those persons were seized from whom torture wrung those confessions which it always has succeeded in obtaining, afterwards, on their evidence, "a set of men, who were convicted as much of having set fire to Rome as of being hated by the entire human race." To satisfy the people, the incendiaries must be discovered, or rather they must be sought, that they might be accused of a definite crime, among the victims of popular detestation and also of the interested jealousy of the Jews at court.

When Nero had secured the necessary victims, whose defence he was sure no one would undertake, he devised, to seal his reconciliation with the populace, an immense festival, in which the condemned should also have their part. It was not easy to vary the attractions of the amphitheatre.[2] The cross, the axe, and the burning tongs were everyday sights; to bind these wretches to the stake would have been trespassing upon the rights of the circus; to bury them alive would deprive the people of the sight of the agonies of suffering and of death. They were sewn up in the skins of wild beasts and exposed to the fury of dogs, who tore them in pieces. That, however, savoured of the arena. Nero found something even better. The rest were smeared with pitch

[1] Cf. *Carmina Sibyllina*, ii. 176. The date of these verses is probably the year 75. It is now nearly demonstrated that the *Apocalypse* was written during the reign of Galba. Cf. E. Reuss, *Hist. de la Théol. chr.*, t. I. l. iii., chap. 5, and Renan, *l'Apocalypse*.

[2] The Romans had, however, a rich list of tortures. Cf. Sen., *de Ira*, iii. 3; *Consol. ad M.*, 20; *Ep. ad Luc.*, xiii.; Marquardt, V. i. 195; Friedländer, ii. 232, and Le Blant, *Comptes rendus de l'Acad. des inscr.*, 1866, p. 358. Even the burning of human beings was no novelty. Seneca (*loc. cit.*) and Juvenal (*Sat.*, i. 156) make mention of it. The condemned were wrapped in a shirt covered with wax and sulphur, which Juvenal describes (viii. 235) by a name evidently popular: the uncomfortable tunic (*tunica molesta*).

and fastened alive to posts, where they might witness the games granted to the populace in the palace gardens. At night they were set on fire and served as torches to illuminate the scene. Even Tacitus, in spite of himself, is moved to some slight degree of pity as he recounts these brutal pastimes.

Notwithstanding the accounts of two Christian writers of the fourth and fifth century, Sulpicius Severus and Orosius, these executions do not seem to have extended beyond Rome. We know of no decree of senate or decree of prince ordering a general search after Christians, and the real character of this persecution is described by Tacitus, when he says that the Christians were sacrificed rather to the cruelty of Nero than to the public good.[1] There were surely cases of isolated murder, like that of Antipas at Pergamus.[2] Any magistrate, in his zeal for the ancient altars, might find many ways in the existing legislation to punish a Christian, by accusing him of *magic*, the very word which Suetonius employs against them;[3] of *foreign superstition*, whose meaning is not very evident; of *sacrilege*, for he denied the gods; of *high treason*, for did he not insult the soverign pontiff of the Empire? Last of all, he could be accused of participation in a *secret society* and *nocturnal assemblies*, a crime imposed upon all Christians by the necessity of their faith, since it obliged them to attend gatherings which must be from the condition of things secret. No other motives than these afterwards guided the conduct of Trajan, and his conscience remains undisturbed.

The righteous indignation which follows the narrative of these cruelties should not make us unjust towards those who committed them. We ask no indulgence for Nero, but he may be classed with those worthy rulers, who, in pronouncing the death-sentence

[1] It was said that they were persecuted as "enemies of the human race;" these words of Tacitus are a rhetorical phrase, and not a penal code. Even in the Roman Empire no one could be condemned upon any such pretext. The profound learning of M. de Rossi and the exactness of his researches are most admirable; he has created a new department of science, that of *Christian archæology*, for which he deserves the gratitude of scholars; but, while following him, I cannot go quite as far as he on certain points. The victims of Nero's festival were indeed taken from among the Christians, but they were punished as incendiaries, which forbids the theory of a general religious persecution as yet. Suetonius (*Nero*, 16) attributes their suffering to the police measures of the emperor in the interest of the capital. See Rossi, *Bull. di Arch. crist.*, 1865, p. 93.

[2] *Apocal.*, ii. 13.

[3] Magicians are burned alive, says Paulus (*Sent.*, v. 13, 17).

in the cause of religion, imagine themselves conforming to the laws of Rome, to religious ideas, and also to public interest. Persecution proves nothing against men like Trajan, Hadrian, and Marcus Aurelius, but it would prove much against the adulterous union of religion and politics if this union had not been the very life of the society of ancient times. Then worship was a part of patriotism and the most important of all institutions of the city; its prosperity seemed to be a part of the prosperity of the State, in such a way that everything which threatened the State-religion was a threat against the State itself. One of the oldest maxims of the Roman government was the forbidding to introduce new religions without the authority of the senate.[1] Under the Republic, strange gods and their worshippers had often been expelled from the city; more than once had the former, or, at least, their images, been thrown into the Tiber, and the latter given over to the executioners.

But if in Rome the Romans defended their gods against strange gods, outside her walls they respected the religions of other nations, as long as they were not, like Druidism, a cause of political disturbance, or, as had at times happened on account of Christian preaching, an occasion of disorder in the cities. This policy can be easily traced in the life of S. Paul. When the Jews of Corinth dragged him as a blasphemer before the tribunal of the proconsul at Achaia, he refused to listen to them: "If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you; but if it be a question of your law, look ye to it: for I will be no judge of such matters." And when, later, the Jews of Jerusalem desired to kill their apostle, the tribune in command in the city delivered him and sent him to Cesarea with this message to the governor: "I perceived him to be accused of questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds." As the priests continually endeavoured to excite the people against "this mover of sedition,"[2] Felix, to prevent fresh disturbance, began to investigate

[1] Cic., *de Leg.*, ii. 8. See the senatus-consultum against the Bacchanals, vol. ii. p. 246, and for the conduct of Augustus, Tiberius, and Claudius, in regard to the Druids, vol. iv. pp. 27 and 324. Tertullian was familiar with this severe legislation, but which, nevertheless, had its foundation in the most approved ideas of patriotism and religion: *Vetus erat decretum*, he says (*Apolog.*, 5), *ne quis deus ab imperatore consecraretur, nisi a senatu probatus.*

[2] "Exciting sedition" (*Acts*, xxiv. 5).

the matter. But Paul was a Roman citizen; on that ground he appealed to the emperor and was carried to Rome, where the affair fell through. He regained his liberty shortly before the great fire, by which it may be plainly seen that within the space of a year the profession of the Christian faith could not have become a crime against the State.[1]

As Rome had thus left to the Jews their national law, Judaism and its different sects, among which Christianity was counted, enjoyed entire liberty in Judæa and in the provinces also, a tolerance from which the government only deviated at intervals to check a proselytism becoming too active or abuse concealed beneath the veil of religion.[2] This continued to be the legal condition of Jewish sects, Jews or Christians of Jewish origin, until the time of Trajan. The war of Judæa, which began in 66, might have had its victims in Rome. The Church fixes the date of the execution of S. Peter and S. Paul in that city at about this time,[3] a tradition which has no proof in history; for outside of the Christian legend there is no evidence that S. Peter was ever in Rome, and nothing after the year 64 is known of S. Paul.[4] But the absence of historic proof need not necessarily weaken this theory, for even pagan writers might have been present at the death of the two apostles, men unknown to them and of obscure condition (*humiliores*), without attaching any greater importance to the event than to many other tortures of which they were witnesses every day.

It is said that Nero, beginning the cruel war of the Empire against the Christians, soon embraced philosophers in the persecution. The Stoic Musonius, who had been implicated in the conspiracy of Piso, was exiled to Gyaros, and afterwards was forced

[1] It could not have become so without a decree of the senate or an edict of the sovereign, either of which Tacitus would surely have mentioned. Concerning such legislation, see the Memoir of M. Le Blant, *Les Bases juridiques des poursuites dirigées contre les martyrs.*

[2] Cf. Josephus, *Ant. Jud.*, xiii. 3, 5.

[3] Tillemont says in 66; Fleury in 67; Pearson in 68, which is the date of the martyrdom of S. Jerome: *XIV. Neronis anno.* S. Clement (*ad Cor.*, i. 5 and 6) affirms this double martyrdom, which gave such great authority to its episcopal see. But it is well known how easily legends spring up in a new-born church; his evidence might have been only an echo of what was already established on that subject. To the imagination of the faithful, two such great apostles could not have disappeared in obscurity.

[4] The *Acts* and the *Epistles* end with the captivity of Paul [if we except the Pastoral Epistles, which, if genuine, as they seem to be, must be placed later.—*Ed.*]

to labour in chains at the isthmus of Corinth, notwithstanding his rank as a knight. The celebrated Apollonius of Tyana, who came to Rome, as he said, "that he might see what sort of a brute a tyrant might be," was brought to trial, accused of sorcery; he escaped, however, this time, but at his departure for Greece Nero decreed that all who made philosophy their profession should be expelled from Rome. The authenticity of this edict rests only upon the testimony of Philostratus, whose accuracy is doubted. However, it may be acknowledged that the accusations of Tigellinus against the Stoics, "an arrogant sect, which made conspirators and stirrers up of sedition," might have made some impression upon the mind of the prince.[1] He had nothing to fear from their ideas, for they were not calculated to descend to the people; but they annoyed Nero, and not unreasonably, for they influenced minds to such a degree, that what otherwise might be called outrages, appeared only devotion to the cause of public good and a moral protest against tyranny. When the Forum and political eloquence were silenced, philosophy had become a fashion, which attracted a few honourable men and many malcontents. All the great minds philosophized, all the more because they fancied they had nothing to fear from the law of the sovereign when they treated of scholastic themes, under which convenient shelter they could easily censure their ruler,[2] who, although failing to recognize his own vices in those of the wicked, or in the virtues of the just those which he did not possess, felt a secret anger against their tiresome sermons, as did Louis XIV. when the former Fronde party and the upper *bourgeoisie* contrasted the austerity of the Jansenists with the gilded vice of Versailles. For some time there were to be continual skirmishes between the government and the philosophers, not without victims, but which a little exercise of good sense on either side might quickly have brought to a termination. The real battle was to be that of creeds, which was to endure for two centuries.

Rome could easily settle the question of Druidism, a worn-out religion, which was exclusively national and wholly without power

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 57. The informer Capito made the same insinuations against Thrasea. (*Ibid.*, xvi. 22.)

[2] The words of Seneca are: *censuram agere regnantium* (*Ep. ad Luc.*, cviii. 13).

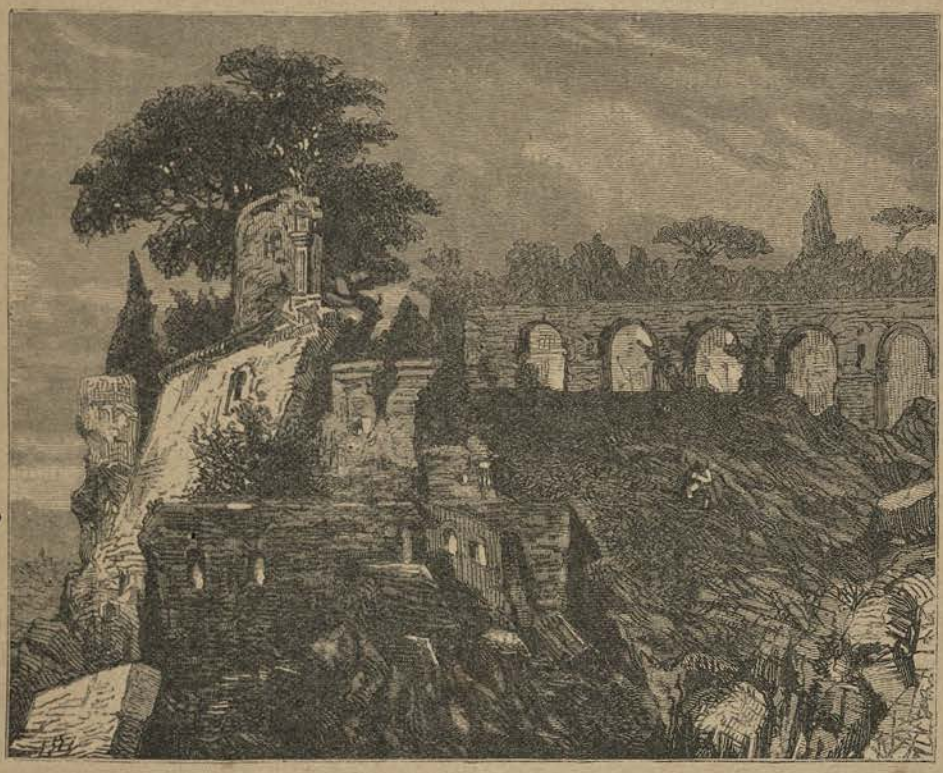
of expansion. For entirely opposite reasons, Christianity, which spreads among those whom philosophy can never reach, became the most formidable enemy of the State, whose head is at the same time master of things divine and human, emperor and sovereign pontiff.

Rome was rebuilt with greater regularity, according to a plan agreed upon by the architects and the emperor; the streets were wide and straight; the houses not so high, detached, and rebuilt with stone from the quarries of Alba and Gabii, with arcades to shade the pathways, and reservoirs of water in case of other fires; the *débris* caused by the excavations, carried down the Tiber, served to fill up the marshes of Ostia. Nero undertook to clear the ground of all rubbish for the proprietors, to build the arcades at his own expense, and to offer a reward to those individuals who should have finished their houses in a limited time. He appropriated for his own use an immense space extending from the Palatine to the Esquiline, and there constructed out of the "ruins of his country," a palace, gardens in which were fields of corn, plains, lakes, forests, and vistas arranged after what are now considered to be modern ideas, but which are only revivals of ancient art; it was like a country residence in the very heart of Rome. This villa was decorated with such a profusion of precious stones, objects of art, and precious metals, that it was called the Golden House. At the entrance of the vestibule stood a statue of Nero 120 feet high;[1] it was surrounded by porticoes or arcades with three rows of columns, 1,000 feet long. The interior was gilded throughout; through narrow openings in the ceilings, composed of movable tablets of ivory, fell showers of perfumes and flowers. One of the rooms revolved by day and by night to imitate the movement of the earth. "At last," he exclaimed, when all was completed, "I am decently lodged."[2] He should rather have said, like a satrap of the East, for there was not so much evidence of good taste as of Asiatic luxury. Nero, who called himself an artist and a poet, was only so in the lowest

[1] Suet., *Nero*, 31; Pliny (*Hist. Nat.*, xxxiv. 7) says 110 feet. After his death it was dedicated to the sun. Cf. Spartianus, *Hadr.*, 19; Lampridius, *Comm.*, 17. The maker of this statue was the same Zenodorus who had made the colossal statue of Mercury for the Auvergnese, which was placed on the summit of the Puy de Dôme. (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, xxxiv. 18.)

[2] Suet., *Nero*, 31.

sense. This graceless luxury seemed to him a proof of his own omnipotence. "No other emperor," he said, "has realized his power;" and he aimed at marvellous effects, as if to prove that even nature must yield him obedience.[1] For this reason he wished to build a canal from Lake Avernus to the Tiber, through mountains and across the Pontine Marshes, of sufficient width to



Ruins of the Palatine over the Circus Maximus.

allow two great ships to sail abreast,[2] so that it might appear as if the sea had come to Rome, while Rome with its great increase would extend to Ostia.

These ruinous constructions did not diminish the extravagant prodigality of his games and feasts, at which a single dish cost at

[1] Suetonius said of Caligula, 27: *Nihil tam efficere concupiscebat quam quod posse effici negaretur.*

[2] This canal, which was to have been 230 kilomètres in length, had for its object the avoiding of Cape Misenum and the promontory of Circeii, where many vessels were lost every year, and to make the Roman Campagna healthy by drying up the Pontine Marshes; a most useful enterprise, but probably impracticable on account of the level of the soil.

times 4,000,000 sesterces; of his furniture of pearl and ivory, his garments of silk and purple, which he never wore a second time; of his mules shod with silver, or Poppæa's horses shod with gold; of that army of attendants which required no less than 1,000 carriages for the shortest journeys; of his presents to courtesans, to actors, to those musicians or gladiators who had received patrimonies and houses, upon whose walls the people had suspended, during the age of liberty, the consular fasces and the triumphal toga.[1] Add to all these extravagances his distributions to the people, who in this way became accustomed to a vice which has remained ever since a Roman inheritance,[2] by throwing at a venture into the crowd purses, under the form of promises to be paid in silver, gold, or precious stones, or even in estates; and the country of Cato seemed to be transformed into one of the palaces reared in imagination for the Caliphs of Scheherazade.[3]

But how were these extravagances to be met? The budget, at last, was exhausted, and the public treasury was poor; he had recourse to the most extraordinary means. The Romans presented the spectacle, which fortunately the world has never seen but once, of a people enriching itself at the expense of the whole world. With the Empire all enterprise came to an end; but as labour is the only producer of riches, and there was very little work done, especially among the conquerors; as the taxes upon the subjects were moderate, and as the multiplication of the number of the citizens exhausted certain sources of income, while expenditure increased every day in behalf of two new forces, the army and the court, the emperors were in the same situation as the house of Capet, when it left its narrow domain to govern France, and the Tudors after the wars of the Roses. Forced by necessity, Philip the Fair arbitrarily lowered or degraded the value of coin and burned the Templars; Henry VIII. stripped the Church

[1] Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, xxxiii. 11; Suet., *Nero*, 30.

[2] The passion for lotteries. Nero threw little balls among the crowd, upon which were inscribed the amounts of the purses to be distributed.

[3] The *fiscus* had vast resources. In 62 Nero ordered that an immense quantity of corn which had been spoiled in the public granaries should be thrown into the Tiber; shortly afterwards 200 vessels laden with corn were destroyed during a storm, 100 others by fire, and yet so abundant were the resources in reserve that the price of corn did not advance in Rome. During the same year he gave 60,000 sesterces to the *ærarium*, with the promise that the same generosity to the public treasury should be repeated every year. (Tac., *Ann.*, xv. 18.)

and sent his lords to the scaffold. The emperors employed similar financial methods; they took gold from the rich wherever they could lay hands upon it, and to make sure their possession, they beheaded the rightful owners. For centuries the Ottoman empire secured its revenue in the same way. Kings, sultans, and emperors were led by an immoral State organization to murder that they might rob.

Nero employed other methods before having recourse to this law of majesty by which he squared his accounts. Reviving Sylla's idea that money is merely a symbol, of only the value which the State chooses to assign, he diminished the weight of the *aureus*,[1] cut down a pound to ninety-six denarii of silver instead of eighty-four and doubled the alloy, making it ten per cent. instead of five.[2] These gains were slow and small; he sought for swifter measures. He had asked or rather extorted the gifts of private individuals and of the provinces for the rebuilding of Rome.[3] These proving insufficient, he pillaged throughout the Empire all public properties, which are usually feebly protected. In Greece and Asia, he seized the precious offerings and the images of the gods from the temples.[4] At Rome, he took all the gold which the Roman nation had consecrated to its tutelary gods in its prosperity and its reverses; he even ordered the statues of the Penates to be melted down. After robbery comes taxation;[5] the genius of finance, which was hereafter to develop such fertility of invention, revealed to him a new source of profit: he made

Aureus of Nero.

Denier of Nero.

[1] See vol. ii. p. 730, n. 3. According to Letronne, the *aureus* of Cæsar weighed 125,66 grains; that of Nero 115,39. Pliny says (xxxiii. 3, 4) "that Nero reduced the *aureus* to one forty-fifth of a pound," but that would be the weight of 7 gr. 280, and no gold coin of the emperor fell so low. (Saglio, *Dict. des Ant.*, vol. i. p. 563, see word *Aureus*.)

[2] Lenormant, *la Monnaie dans l'Antiquité*, vol. iii. p. 30.

[3] Suet., 38, and Dion, lxii. 18.

[4] This sacrilege caused a revolution in Pergamus, where the citizens prevented the agent of Nero from bearing away their statues and pictures. (Tac., *Ann.*, xvi. 23.) Rhodes also refused to allow herself to be robbed. (Dion Chrys., *Orat.*, 31.)

[5] Tac., *Ann.*, xv. 45.

sumptuary laws; he forbade the use of purple and violet, and then stealthily encouraged merchants to sell them that he might confiscate the estates of those who bought them. He found still another means of raising money, the pursuit of wills; he decreed that the property of all those who showed themselves ungrateful towards their prince in their wills should belong to the public treasury; but where should this ingratitude begin, where end? A prætor, for whom he had acted in company with other comedians, paid him 1,000,000 sesterces for his part. In such proportions did he expect legacies to be made in his favour. This royal law was in force, however, after the conspiracy of Piso in the year 65.

IV.—Conspiracies and Executions; Seneca, Lucan, Thrasea; Stoicism.

We have shown how many pretenders during the reign of Tiberius contested the Empire with him.[1] Each reign had its crop of them, and thus it will be from the reign of Tiberius to that of Diocletian, and as long as a military monarchy endures. We have already seen them during the reign of Nero; at least, Tigellinus caused Sylla and Plautus to be killed upon that pretext; others will also appear, and probably all are not known to us. As for the republicans, it has been before stated that they were more numerous under Tiberius than in the time of Augustus, and still more so at the court of Nero. But we must understand the true meaning which the name republic then held. It did not signify that free commonwealth where every citizen made the laws, which were afterwards to be religiously obeyed. No one could have been reminded of the sons of the conquerors of Hannibal in beholding that tattered crowd which of its royalty retained only the right of being impatient at the circus, when Nero delayed commencing the games, and became silent at the moment when the sovereign threw his napkin to them from a window as a signal that his dinner was over.[2] The

[1] See p. 284 *sq.*

[2] The presiding officer of the races threw a white handkerchief into the lists from his balcony. This was the signal for the start. (Friedländer, vol. ii. p. 212.)

knights, who no longer controlled the farming of the taxes, nor the criminal judicature, had no further influence in politics. The same was true of the senate. Great ruins need to be seen from a distance. For a short period after the battle of Actium there was but a slight degree of reverence for the senate, into which every victory pushed its successful soldiers. But when, in the lapse of time, things could be viewed in their proper relations, when, during the leisure of five reigns, there was time to look back to happier days, when imbecile or frivolous tyrants were unknown, both sight and memory reverted to those Conscript Fathers who had conquered Italy and subdued the world. Then the Curia appeared like the temple of wisdom, and the senate became an idol to be worshipped, and Lucan called it "the venerable Order." The emperors, parvenus of yesterday, had slight regard for this idol, forcing it to commit a thousand indignities, but with every sign of external respect. Nevertheless, it was a great name, and it was believed that it might again become great, by giving it the appearance of reality, by obliging the prince to become once more, as his title indicated, the first of the senators. This was demanded at the death of Caius, and now again under Nero; revolutionary ideas went no further than this. The Antonines also will appear to have accomplished this by the regard which they showed towards the assembly, and their popularity was due quite as much to this policy as to their virtues.

Nero, on the contrary, publicly proclaimed disdain and scorn of the senate, as did Caligula, with great insolence. The intention of abolishing it was attributed to him, and he permitted one of his flatterers to say to him, "I hate you because you are a senator." It is not surprising that many of the Conscript Fathers joined the conspiracy of Piso, which "became powerful as soon as it was formed." Tacitus is not explicit as regards the final intent of the conspirators. Some of them spoke of liberty and the senate, others of a new emperor. The disgust with which Nero inspired the highest Roman society evidently created the desire to get rid of him; but the revolution was to be attempted by those whose interest was to forward it, that is, by the senate, and it was to be carried out to its profit. Consequently, without suppressing its head, representative of that unity of power of

which all recognized the necessity, they might nevertheless take precautions to subordinate that head to the assembly.

These conspirators were neither men of the golden age nor of antique virtue. There was as much debauchery in their homes as in the palace of the emperor, nor had they any clearer knowledge of the true needs of the State. The chief of them, Piso, belonged to the illustrious family of the Calpurnii. He possessed those advantages which at that period fascinated the people without as yet exciting their envy: he had an immense fortune, high rank, and fine manners. He was helpful to the poor, whom he defended before the tribunals after the manner of the patrons of ancient times; he was also accessible to the humble, the most obscure of whom never left his presence without bearing away aid, or at least encouraging words; besides, he delighted in pleasure and luxury, as did all who belonged to his rank, with few scruples in the methods by which he sought the means of indulgence.[1] Like them also he wished to reach the highest place, solely for the petty ambition of not remaining second. He consented to any honour which was put upon him, without any intention of troubling himself as to the execution of the enterprise.

The conspiracy was principally military. Nero had divided the command of the guard between two prefects: Tigellinus, his favourite, and Fænius Rufus, who had been kept in the background and wished to emerge therefrom. The latter had won over to his side the tribunes, centurions, and even the soldiers, who were indifferent to political questions, although some of their number were ashamed of the emperor's degradation; the greater number were anxious for a change, simply for the sake of change or promotion. In their train followed a multitude of bankrupts and malcontents, the usual recruits of conspiracies and riots.

Among the number of senators enrolled among the conspirators was one designated for the consulship, Plautius Lateranus,[2] the only one, perhaps, who cherished the idea of constitutional reform. Seneca knew of it.[3] There was no safety for him except in the

[1] He abducted the wife of one of his friends (Tac., *Ann.*, xv. 59).

[2] The magnificent palace of this Roman served as a residence for emperors, and was given to the Popes by Constantine. (Bunsen, *Beschr. der Stadt Rom.*, III., i. 469.)

[3] Tacitus (*Ann.*, xv. 61, 65) does not confirm his complicity. Dion (lxii. 24) does not doubt

death of Nero, who had wished to poison him. Without assuming any active part in the execution, he promised to profit by the good opinion which several of the conspirators had manifested towards him. A wounded poetical vanity influenced his nephew Lucan to join them. As the author of *Pharsalia* in his poem easily puts aside the truth of history, so in his life, as favourite of Nero and companion of his pleasures, does the eulogist of Cato leave his lofty maxims behind him at the door of the palace. Lucan, good courtier as he was, could not quite consent to flatter Nero's unfortunate mania, or acknowledge him to be emperor of poetry as well as emperor of the world. Nero forbade him to read his verses in public. This spite recalled Brutus and Cassius to the mind of the poet; he undertook to play their part.[1] We shall see how he carried it out. Epicharis, a woman who had joined the conspiracy, strove to win over a chiliarch of the fleet of Misenum, who betrayed her, but she denied everything and the secret was safe. This was a proof to the conspirators that suspicion had been aroused and that they must make haste. They proposed to Piso that he should kill the prince, when he next came to visit him without his guard, as was his custom, at his villa at Baiæ. Piso refused. He was afraid that if the blow were struck at Baiæ, as soon as the news came to Rome some other man of like ambition, or perhaps the consul Vestinus, might attempt to restore the Republic. The assassination was postponed to the public games, and Flavius Scævinus, a senator, begged for the honour of striking the first blow.

The evening before the day appointed Scævinus wrote his will and ordered his freedman Milichus to sharpen his dagger, which he had taken from a temple in Etruria, and considered destined to serve as instrument in a noble enterprise. He then gave a great banquet to his friends, freed those slaves whom he loved best and gave money to others. He also ordered Milichus to make the necessary preparations for bandaging wounds and stanching blood. These circumstances roused the suspicion of the freedman, who ran to the palace and told his story. Scævinus, when summoned, denied everything at first. But he had previously held

it. Juvenal evidently alludes to it in this verse: *Quis tam perditus ut dubitet Senecam præferre Neroni?* (*Sat.*, viii. 211).

[1] See the flattery which he lavishes upon Nero at the opening of *Pharsalia*.

a long consultation with another conspirator, Antonius Natalis. They were both questioned separately, their stories did not agree, and Natalis, put to torture, made a full confession; he gave the names of Piso and Seneca. Scævinus, when he had heard what had been revealed, disclosed his companions, among whom were Tullius Senecio, Lucan and Afranius Quintianus. Lucan incriminated his own mother Acilia; the two others denounced Glitius Gallus and Asinius Pollio, their best friends. Such was the noble courage of these haughty republicans! In the presence of torture, without further trial, they lost all dignity and delivered up their friends and kindred to save their own lives. Why was not Lucan as much a parricide as Nero, when he accused his innocent mother?[1] To what depth of cowardice had despotism and corruption dragged even those souls which seemed of the highest strain! Never had the moral standard of the world fallen so low.

A woman and a courtesan put these noble Romans to shame. Epicharis had been held in prison. "Nero ordered her body to be racked by torture. But neither stripes, fire, nor the untiring rage of her executioners irritated at the bravery of a woman could conquer her." As they were carrying her in a litter to the rack the next day, because her limbs were broken, she slipped a cord around her neck and strangled herself on the way. A few soldiers also showed some trace of antique heroism. Nero asked a centurion why he became a conspirator. He answered: "Because after the crimes of which you are accused I could do you no greater service." The tribune Subrius Flavus made this reply to the same inquiry: "You had no more faithful soldier as long as you deserved to be loved. But I have hated you since I saw you murder both your mother and your wife, and became a coachman, a comedian, and an incendiary." As he was led into a neighbouring field where they were digging a grave too narrow for him: "They cannot even do that properly," said he. The tribune whose office it was to put him to death, commanded him to hold his throat right: "See that you strike right," was his reply. The other centurions died without weakness. The same cannot be said of many of the senators.

[1] Nothing was proved against her. Nero forgot her.

Piso was urged to attempt bold measures, to speak to the people, to the soldiers, or at least to venture more in a desperate struggle, since he had nothing but death before him. But these endeavours terrified the indolent patrician, who was an actor like Nero,[1] and who perhaps would have governed no better than he. He eulogized the emperor highly in a codicil to his will, and while awaiting the arrival of the soldiers to arrest him, opened his veins. The prefect of the prætorium, Fænius Rufus, also disgraced his testament with base regrets.

Seneca.[2]

The consul Vestinus was more courageous. While he was giving a great banquet soldiers arrived and demanded him; he rose, followed the tribune into a chamber, where the surgeon was in waiting. His veins were opened, and he was carried, still full of life, into a warm bath, without uttering a word.

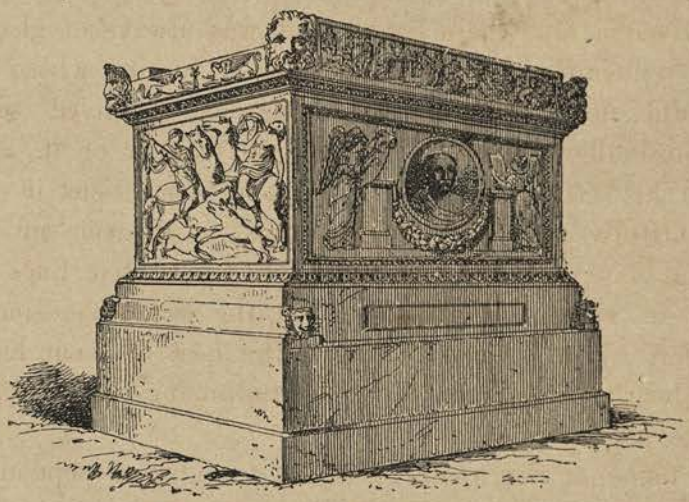
Lateranus, who had been appointed consul, refused to reveal anything; Epaphroditus, the messenger of Nero, only gained from him this reply: "When I have anything to tell I will tell it to your master.' The tribune who had the execution in charge also belonged to the conspiracy. Lateranus held out his neck without a word, and as the first blow only wounded him he shook his head and placed it again in a proper position to be struck off.[3]

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, xv. 65.

[2] Marble statue found at Tusculum (Campana Museum. H. d'Escamps, *op. cit.*, No. 73).

[3] Epictetus, *Dissert.*, I. i. 20.

Seneca could not die so simply. He prudently refused to be put forward, but some of the conspirators, it was said, desired after Nero should have been made away with by Piso, to get rid of him also and make Seneca emperor. He was returning from Campania to Rome, on the day of the execution, and had stopped at a villa four miles beyond the walls, when the emperor, urged on by Poppæa, informed him of the accusations of Natalis. Nero asked the messenger upon his return if the guilty man had passed judgment on himself. "He has no idea of doing so," answered the tribune, who was sent back with a death warrant.



Tomb of Seneca on the Appian Way.[1]

Seneca received it unmoved and called for his will. The centurion refused him this favour, whereupon he called his friends to witness that it was impossible for him to requite their services. "I bequeath to you," he said, "the example of my life." And as they burst into tears: "Where," he said, "is that philosophy and reason which should have prepared you, during all these years, for any stroke of destiny?" His wife Paulina did not wish to survive him. He at first opposed her determination, but at last his tenderness feared to expose her to further outrage. "I have showed to you," he said, "what might induce you to live: you prefer the honour of death. I am not envious of such courage." The same instrument opened the veins in the arms of both. As

[1] Restoration from Canina (see *Prima parte della Via Appia*, pl. xviii.).

his blood flowed slowly, he ordered that the veins in his legs and joints should be cut. His eloquence did not forsake him even in his last moments; he called for his secretaries and dictated to them a long discourse. Still death did not come; he drank hemlock without effect. Then, as the soldiers were in haste to finish the matter, he stepped into a warm bath, and, as the master of Plato in the Athenian prison scattered a few drops of poison in honour of the divinity, sprinkled his slaves with water as a libation to Jupiter the Deliverer. Seneca wished to be the Roman Socrates. If not in his life, he almost became so by his works.

Paulina, whose wounds had been bandaged by the emissaries of Nero, lived a few years longer, but was always of ghastly pallor as if in remembrance of her sacrifice. Lucan, whose detestable betrayal did not avail to save him, also received sentence of death: Nero allowed him to choose the manner of it. He wrote a note to his father recommending some corrections in his poem, dined plentifully and held out his arms; a surgeon cut the veins. As he felt his extremities grow cold, he recited lines from his *Pharsalia* in which he had described the somewhat similar death of a soldier. These men, who, even the best of them, had no firm belief at heart, died theatrically, attitudinizing in the presence of death, like gladiators in the arena.

The name of Lucan in Latin letters has a popularity which does not extend to his work.[1] The subject of *Pharsalia* was one of the most magnificent and tragical which a patriotic poet could have chosen, since it treated of the most important event of ancient times: the death of the Republic and the birth of the Empire. With the aid of history, which offered to him great men, great subjects, contrasted manners, ideas, and ambitions, the author had no need of the dangerous assistance of mythological commonplaces, nor the ordinary conventionalities of composition. To treat such a subject suitably, however, demanded that maturity of talent which in the nature of the case could not belong to a poet of twenty-five years. He also lacked grace, sentiment, and genuineness, for genuineness, which might seem to be a quality belonging to those

[1] It was popular during some time in Rome. Suetonius (*Lucani vita*) remembered public readings of the poem, and mentions the folly of publishers who undertook to *illustrate* copies which were for sale.

who were yet undazzled by the false glory of the world, is nevertheless one of the last gifts of the Muse. As it often happens that the youth who wishes to appear vigorous and strong speaks with a rough voice, that he may seem a man, so the *Pharsalia* has verses which seem to come from a brazen trumpet, and throughout the poem runs too strong a sap, which sends forth rugged and vigorous shoots, but which does not produce those pleasing and delicate flowers which a sweeter and truer nature causes to spring up in the art of Virgil. Voltaire, who favours Lucan for several reasons, said of his poem: "I seem to see a bold and immense portal, which leads only to ruins." Perhaps the grandeur of his story was fatal to him. The primitive epic, which speaks in the silence of all other witnesses, magnifies history in creating it. But in the ages when all the secrets are known, history mars the poets who strive to play with those colossal events which are not of their own creation. We prefer to see Cæsar, to see Cato face to face, than reflected in the imperfect mirror of Lucan.

Seneca had nearly reached the end of his writing, Lucan was just beginning his; this double murder must be added to the crimes whose memory weighs so heavily upon the fame of Nero. We may meet the philosopher once more, but here we must take leave of the poet, who perhaps might have accomplished greater things if he had been allowed to live.[1] His clear and energetic style, his lofty images and fine verses may recommend him to the lovers of literature, but he has no contribution to make to our book, for his history is untrue, his eloquence is that of the schools,[2] and his philosophy belongs to the Porch, where we prefer to seek it for ourselves.

At the close of the executions, the exiles, and the confiscations, Nero proclaimed an edict with an address, recounting at length the full particulars of the plot and the confessions of the conspirators. Then recompenses were awarded: 2,000 sesterces to each prætorian, who were hereafter to be exempt from paying for

[1] M. Nisard thinks not, however (*Poëtes latins de la Décadence*, vol. ii. p. 31), and perhaps he may be right, for the faults of Lucan were not of a kind to be easily cured.

[2] Some of his speeches, however, are very fine, for instance, that of Cato near the temple of Ammon, whose oracle he refuses to consult because his own conscience is sufficient for him. (*Phars.*, ix. 574 *sq.*) Quintilian considered Lucan greater as an orator than as a poet.

rations of corn; triumphal ornaments and statues in the Forum to Tigellinus, to Petronius Turpilianus and to Nerva,[1] those of the consulate to Nymphidius; then came the base adulations of the Fathers, who consecrated the horse-races to his honour with religious offerings; Anicius Cerialis, who had been appointed consul, demanded a temple for the god Nero.[2] The dagger of Scævinus was consecrated to Jupiter the Avenger, and the month

Torso of Jupiter (Museum of the Louvre).

of April was henceforth called the month of Nero. In spite of all these degradations, we must acknowledge that, although some of the victims were innocent, the conspirators were guilty and deserved their condemnation.

The death of Poppæa, whom Nero wounded mortally in a frenzy of brutal anger, seemed to excite him to fresh cruelty.[3] He forbade Cassius to attend her obsequies, and shortly after banished him. Silanus was accused of some unknown complicity with him;

[1] Cf. Borghesi, *Œuvres*, v. 29.

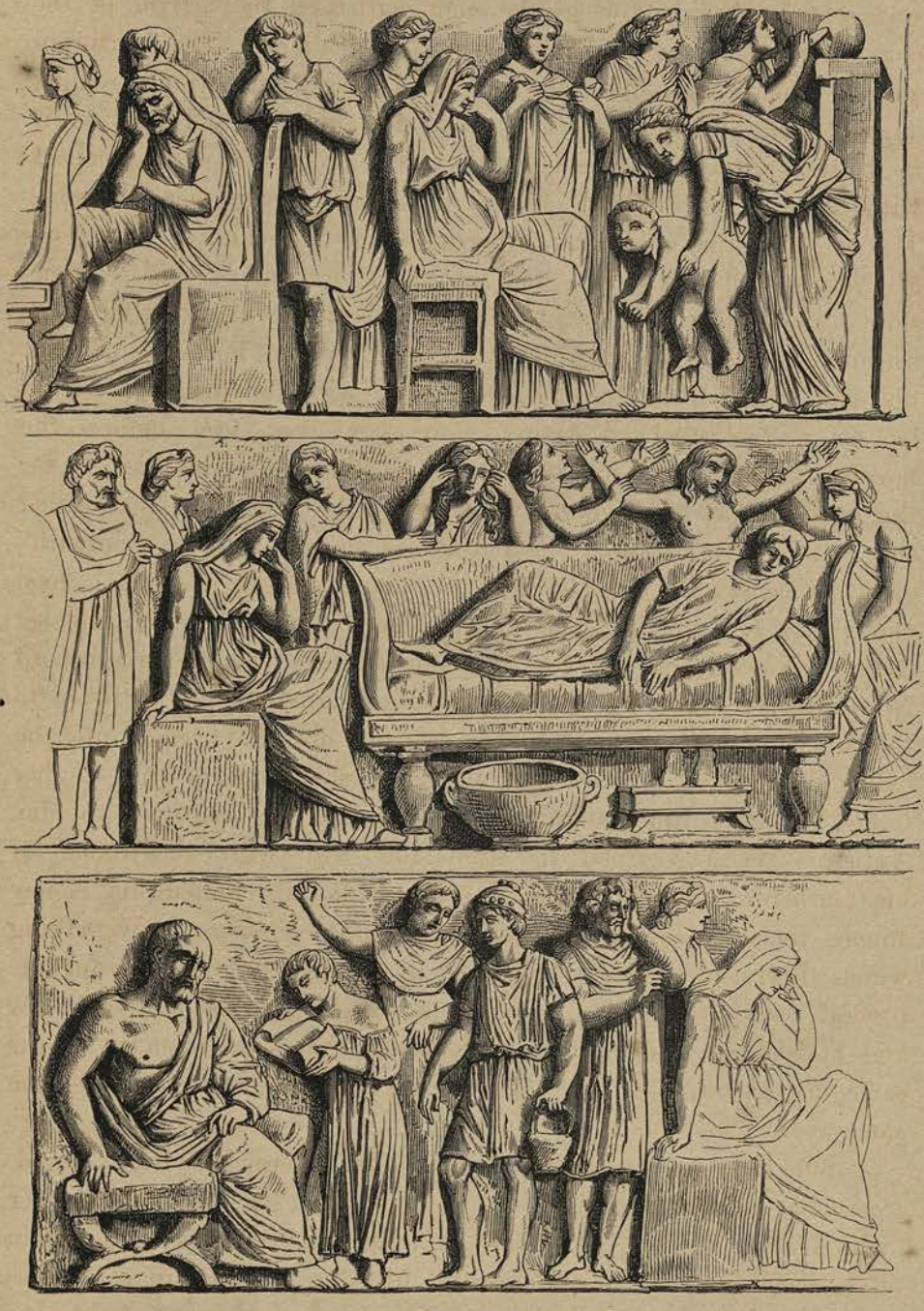
[2] Tac., *Ann.*, xv. 74.

[3] He would not allow her body to be burned according to the Roman custom, but ordered her to be buried in the tomb of Julius. (Tac., *Ann.*, xvi. 6.)

a victim to his own popularity and his descent from Augustus, he was sent to Barium, where he soon witnessed the arrival of the customary executioners, a centurion and soldiers. The centurion advised him to open his veins. Silanus, young and strong, replied angrily, and although unarmed, defended himself and fell as if in battle, pierced with many blows, all of which were received with his face towards the enemy. Another tragedy soon followed. The consul Antistius Vetus, father-in-law of Rubellius Plautus, one of Nero's earliest victims, was feared on account of this relationship. Accused by a person whom he had punished during his proconsulate in Asia, he withdrew to the town of Formiæ and sent his daughter Pollitta to plead his cause with the prince. Pollitta had seen her husband slain before her eyes, and before the murderers bore away his bleeding head she wished to kiss it for the last time, in token of undying love. She kept the blood which she had piously gathered up and the garments stained therewith; always inconsolable and shrouded in mourning, she only took food enough to support life. Yielding to her father's entreaty, she set out for Naples, and as she was not admitted to the presence of Nero she placed herself in his way, and cried to him to listen to the innocent and not to deliver a consul, his old friend, into the hands of a slave. It was all in vain; she then returned to her father, to tell him courageously that he was destined to die. Antistius Vetus scorned to stain his will with the name of his murderer. He called his slaves to him, distributed his money among them, and ordered them to take possession of everything which they could, except three couches, which he reserved for the funeral obsequies. This being done, he, with his mother-in-law and his daughter, opened their veins in the same room, with the same instrument, and three generations perished at once under the same roof.[1]

But there is no appeasing fear, and Nero had been afraid. Since the conspiracy of Piso one condemnation had followed another with fearful rapidity. Just now it fell upon Antistius Vetus, again it becomes the turn of Publius Anteius; the brave Marcus Ostorius Scapula, of whose strength even his murderers were afraid, but

[1] Tac., *Ann.*, xvi. 10–12.



Funeral Ceremony (Bas-relief in the Louvre).

who held up his throat to them without resistance; Annæus Mela, the father of Lucan; Anicius Cerialis, Rufrius Crispinus, former prefect of the prætorium; Petronius, voluptuous and effeminate, who, playing with death, opened his veins, closed them again to open them anew, while songs and gay poetry were recited to him. Some of his slaves he rewarded, others he ordered to be punished, he walked and slept, and to end all, described in his will the most monstrous of Nero's debaucheries and sent it to him sealed (66). Like many of his day he spent his life badly, but ended it bravely. This Stoic style of dying seemed to have become a sort of custom which every man who had any self-respect was bound to observe.

The most illustrious victim was Thrasea Pætus. "In killing him," said Tacitus, "Nero hoped to destroy virtue itself." The reproach against him was that he had not been to the senate for three years, that he had not made any sacrifice for the safety of the prince, for his divine voice,[1] and that he had denied the divinity of Poppæa; his silence, his withdrawal from public affairs, were, they said, an accusation against the emperor, against himself: Cato was coming to life again.[2] Well may it be said that these suspicions were somewhat tardy, after the Empire had raised him to the summit of honour, though a provincial of the municipality of Padua. And when the consular was commanded by Eprius Marcellus[4] to appear at the Curia, the pontifex to attend the public rites, the citizens to take the yearly oath of fidelity; when he was reproached for saying everywhere: "There is no longer a senate, magistrates, laws, or even Rome;" we must admit that the behaviour of so conspicuous a man, whose house was the rendezvous of the most distinguished citizens,[5] was an encouragement to dangerous enterprises. But to live in retirement and rail against the government in the presence of the household gods must always appear a curious crime. Only a Nero could have commanded Thrasea to cease an opposition so discreetly maintained.

Eprius Marcellus, proconsul.[3]

[1] Sacrifices were offered up if he had taken a cold.

[2] Thrasea wrote a life of Cato (Plutarch, *Cato*, 25, 37).

[3] Man standing, bearing a trident. Bronze coin struck at Cymæ (*Cabinet de France*).

[4] See Borghesi, concerning Eprius Marcellus (*Œuvres*, iii. 285–293).

[5] *Illustrium virorum feminarumque cœtus frequentes* (Tac., *Ann.*, xvi. 34).

The first step was to forbid his presence at the *fêtes* to be given upon the arrival of Tiridates in Rome. In a cool and dignified letter, he simply demanded of the prince that judges at least be granted to him; this was allowed: the senate was convened. At daybreak, under pretence of protecting the Fathers against imaginary conspirators, the Curia was surrounded by two prætorian cohorts, fully armed, and by a multitude whose swords were seen beneath their togas, men who were doubtless paid to act the part of the populace in this tragedy, pretending to be ready to rush forward in the defence of Nero. The quæstor of the sovereign gave notice of an imperial message, in which, without naming individuals, Nero reproached the senators for abandoning their public duties, and by their indifference to the interest of the State affording a precedent to that of the equestrian order. The senate understood the intimation conveyed, and the accusers were in readiness. There seems to have been no debate, and no one dared to appear in defence of Thrasea. The accused awaited the verdict of the Fathers in his own house. When informed of it, he prepared for death with firmness, but without ostentation; he made no studied harangues to his friends, but dismissed them, lest they also might be compromised, and persuaded his wife Arria to live for the sake of their daughter. When the veins of his arm were opened, he called to his side the quæstor who had brought the sentence and said to him: "Look, young man. May the gods avert this omen! But you live in an age in which it is good to strengthen the soul by examples of courage."

Tacitus places the virtuous Barea Soranus beside Thrasea. As proconsul of Asia, he had won the affection of that province by carrying on great operations in the port of Ephesus, and by refraining to punish the inhabitants of Pergamus for their resistance to one of the emperor's freedmen who had undertaken to carry off their statues and pictures. This solicitude for his subjects appeared like a menace of revolt to the insensate master of the Empire. Still another grievance was found: Servilia, the daughter of Soranus, had consulted the soothsayers concerning the issue of the suit against her father; she was implicated in the accusation and appeared before the senate. "Father and daughter stood before the consuls; the father was advanced in years, the

daughter, barely twenty, already condemned to widowhood by the recent banishment of her husband Annius Pollio, did not dare even to raise her eyes to Soranus, for fear of increasing his danger. Upon being interrogated by the accuser if she had not sold her necklace and wedding presents, that she might use the money for purposes of magic, she threw herself upon the ground and wept long in silence; at last, embracing the altars: 'No,' she said, 'I invoked no false gods; I uttered no imprecations; my wretched petitions had no other object but to obtain from you, Cæsar, and from you, senators, the safety of the best of fathers. I did give to those men my jewels, my garments, and the ornaments befitting my rank; I would willingly have given them my blood and my life had they required them. I cannot answer for them; they were unknown to me, nor do I know who they are, nor the arts they practise; for my own part, I have never spoken of the prince but as I speak of the gods. If I am guilty, I alone am guilty, and my unhappy father was ignorant of my misdeeds.'

"Soranus would not allow her to finish; he exclaimed that his daughter had not accompanied him to Asia; that she was not implicated in the accusation against her husband, that her only crime was too great tenderness; that she did not deserve to suffer his fate, and that whatever that might be, it would be sweet to him." At this point they rushed into one another's arms; the lictors interposed and held them back. Both were allowed to choose the mode of dying.

Each of the accusers of Thrasea received a recompense of 5,000,000 sesterces (£50,000); those of Soranus only 1,200,000, but in addition they received the ornaments of the quæstorship. The profession of informer had thus become the most lucrative of trades.[1]

Tacitus even grew weary of recounting deaths like these; and in spite of all he writes in honour of the memory of these victims, he cannot now and then refrain from letting the words "servile patience" and "cowardly resignation"[2] escape his lips. And truly,

[1] Paconius, Agrippinus, and Helvidius Priscus were banished, and Montanus was declared unworthy to hold public office, etc.

[2] *Patientia servilis . . . . tam segniter pereuntes . . . . ignavia per silentium pereuntium* (*Ann.*, xvi. 16, 25). He had before spoken in the *Life of Agricola* (42) of those dramatic death-scenes as ambitious besides being useless: *in nullum reipublicæ usum ambitiosa morte inclaruerunt.*

although these men possessed the courage to die without weakness, they had not the courage to struggle to save themselves and the Empire by desperate and lofty devotion. While civil war was going on in the senate, in spite of tradition, they could have joined that party whose principle it was to defend the cause of order and the future at the Palatine. But here was for a second time the imperial power drifting into the maddest cruelty, and a crowned mountebank who cannot live without adding murder to debauchery. Like a wild beast, he kills for the pleasure of killing, and will surely be brought low, for in history, even more than in private life, punishment never fails to overtake criminals in high places.

The vengeance which is drawing near will be in the form of civil war, to be followed by military usurpation; the existing scourge will be destroyed by another, which will bring the Empire into bloody disorder, only to give rise in its turn to yet another form of tyranny. Was there nothing to save the world from this two-fold evil? Even if those institutions were lacking, whose absence we have deplored, there is still something in the character of strong men which could have averted many dangers, and we have seen that great men were not wanting in Rome, whose very names we pronounce with the deepest reverence. Many were disciples of the same doctrine, that of the Porch, one of the noblest efforts of human intellect. Without examining here its philosophic value, we certainly have a right to ask, in face of all these disgraces, what it might have prevented if it had learned how to make citizens as well as men.

The grandeur which remained to some few men has been attributed to Stoicism. Nor was it useless to them, for it sustained them by their firm consciousness of the dignity of man, a strong foundation on which they could build solidly, but which alone is not enough to bear the burden of life. The Rome of old was not so entirely blotted out that the ancient courage could not re-appear from time to time, like an inheritance of manners and of past generations; and as now every one was more or less of a philosopher, those who held to the old ideas turned to the teachings of Zeno, which were for the few, and whose stern form suited well their aristocratic virtue.

"In the Roman world," said Hegel, "Stoicism was at home." Even in the herd of Epicurus were those who knew how to die as well as Thrasea. We saw how lightly a voluptuary could play with death. Another was told that the senate was about to decide his fate: "Well, let them do it; I am on my way to the bath, for it is my hour." Upon his return he learned that he was condemned: "To what, exile or death?" "To exile." "Will my property be confiscated?" "No." "Come on, then! We can sup at Aricia as well as at Rome."[1] I allow that all those Romans may be enrolled under the standard of the Porch who were unstained by the universal corruption of the time; but however honourable that philosophy might have been to those who put it into practice, it had no power with the masses. What influence might not have been exerted in the State by these men, who aspired after unattainable heights of virtue, as did Nero after unattainable depths of vice; who, studying how they might destroy the very nature of man by suppressing his passions, in order that the wise might be unmoved by all things, even by glory itself; and thus maintaining that neither things nor persons were necessary to them, they pitied the anxieties of others, who strove to improve their condition, and exclaimed with Apollonius: "I care not for public affairs, since I only live in the divine;"[2] and their virtuous naïvetés recall the sentimental denunciations of Rousseau and his school? "Great God!" exclaims Persius, "if thou desirest the punishment of a tyrant, show him virtue when the dread delirium seizes him, that at that vision he may languish and suffer the agony of his regret at having forsaken her."[3] I can imagine how greatly Nero must have been amused at the innocence of the Stoic poet as he read these lines in company with his friends Tigellinus and Sporus, although it nevertheless irritated him to meet, in the height of his gaiety, these men with their pale sober faces, who conversed of death only, as if it were impossible to live with honour during his reign. The haughty egotism of the sect was also strengthened by their belief in fate,[4] which compelled

[1] Arrian, *Epict.*, i. 1.

[2] Philostratus, *Vita Apoll.*, v. 35. See Martha (*Lucretius*, p. 200), upon the indifference of the Stoics to politics.

[3] *Sat.*, iii. 35–38.

[4] *Fata nos ducunt et quantum cuique restat, prima nascentium hora disposuit . . . . privata*

each mind, according to its individual characteristics, to stupid resignation or to acts of violence; of these teachings, the Stoics of Rome chose the silent protest and the dignity of the dying hour. They made a solitude for themselves in the midst of the world and lived for themselves alone, absorbed in their own personal affairs, without rising to consideration of the general good: they are the hermits of paganism. "Abstain and endure," was their axiom.[1] The master of Epictetus struck him violently on the leg. "Take care, you will break it." The blow was repeated and the bone broke. "I told you so." Such was their stubborn and inactive wisdom. In political affairs, wisdom of this sort made malcontents who frowned at the prince; it neither made men of action nor good counsellors.[2] Thus the Stoics allowed the tyrants to strike as they chose, and fancied that their duty was fulfilled when they suffered torture unmoved, flinging the saying of Seneca to the lictors: "Against the outrages of life I have the recourse to death." But true courage consists in taking part in the struggle, rather than in sitting alone, even for the sake of a glorious death. If they had been less satisfied with their negative virtue they might have aroused the feeling of the public, and prevented the senate from giving to the world the sickening spectacle of the lowest point of degradation into which a political assembly ever fell. The disturbance made against Poppæa by the people in favour of Octavia proved that, even in the Roman populace, all feeling of justice was not extinct, and that there was still some support remaining for the resolute and courageous.

By its doctrine of non-interference, Stoicism, so thoroughly Roman in many respects, was nevertheless in direct contradiction to the spirit of ancient Rome, where during six centuries the word virtue signified devotion to the State. It will be remembered that before this, at the decline of the Republic, the sages of the sect

ac publica longus ordo rerum trahit . . . . olim constitutum est quid gaudeas, quid fleas (Sen. *de Prov.*, 5).

[1] *Id., ad Marc.*, 10. [It should be noted that this was far from being the theory of the founders of the sect, who thought the wise man should contribute actively to the public good. Cf. Diog. Laert., VII. i. 123–4.—*Ed.*]

[2] Seneca attempts (*de Clem.*, ii. 5) to exculpate Stoicism from being *minime principibus regibusque bonum datura consilium*. Tigellinus represented to Nero *Stoicorum arrogantia quæ turbidos et negotiorum appetentes faciat* (Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 57).

of Epicurus withdrew from public affairs;[1] hence the two schools which held the greatest influence over Roman thought were rather an encouragement than a restraint to tyranny: one by its indifference, the other by its resignation, so that the despotism of the Empire was not more controlled by ideas than by institutions.

It must also be borne in mind that despotism had not until now become insupportable to the members of the senatorial aristocracy. Outside Rome, in Italy or the provinces, there had been no rumour of conspiracy or of opposition, nor was there perceived the shadow of desire for change. The towns and the people had been granted, in the interest even of the sovereign, guarantees which had always proved sufficiently strong to counteract the excesses of their governors, and in their municipal liberties they found all the independence necessary for their pride and the management of their affairs.

V.—VINDEX.

The time had now come when Nero was to add his blunders to his crimes, and to arouse those who had before been undisturbed. Intoxicated by power and his own abuse thereof, he imagined it infallible, and shrank from no imprudence. He insulted his generals by subjecting the most distinguished of them to the control of his freedmen,[2] and by removing from the armies the leaders who were most beloved, because victories had been won under their command. Suetonius Paulinus, the conqueror of the Moors and the Britons, suffered disgrace, and Plautius Silvanus, the able commander of Mœsia, was left forgotten without honours at his post. Two brothers of the ancient family Scribonia, Rufus and Proculus, commanding the armies of the two Germanies, were recalled, under pretext of a consultation with the emperor concerning the interest of their provinces, but met the order of death on their way. The fate of Domitius Corbulo,

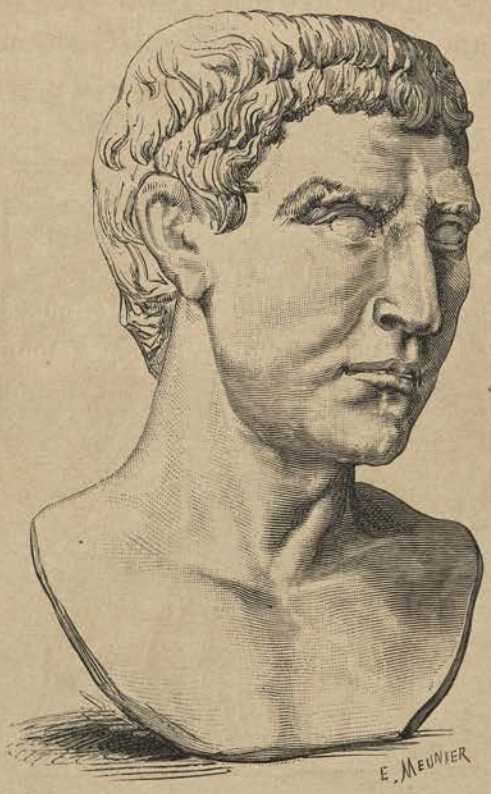
Coin of Corbulo.[3]

[1] See vol. ii. p. 216.

[2] Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 39.

[3] Cybele standing between two lions. Bronze coin of Corbulo, proconsul, struck at Docimea: ΑΝΘΥΠΑΤΟΣ.

the greatest general of his time, was as follows: summoned to Greece, he had hardly set foot in the port of Cenchreæ, when he was surrounded by the secret agents of the imperial executions; he fell upon his own sword, saying: "I deserved it." Was this regret at having served such a man, or at not having overthrown him (67)?[1] When the generals perceived the fate of the most illustrious of their number, each one felt himself threatened, and some of them, like Galba, made preparations for the inevitable crisis which was near at hand.



Corbulo.[2]

Nero alienated both the soldiers and the inhabitants of the provinces. The expenses of the army were immense, and the means of liquidating them came from the provinces; to keep up the balance in the finances which was so disturbed by his prodigality, he did not pay the former, while, at the same time, he overtaxed the latter. The payment of troops was in arrear and the gifts to veterans were postponed; Dion affirms that he even suppressed the distribution of corn in Rome,[3] and that the revolt in Britain was caused by exorbitant taxation. To the proceeds of the taxes he added still other gains: his

[1] He was accused by one of his officers, Arrius Varus (Tac., *Hist.*, iii. 6). Dion (lxii. 19) says that many were ready to declare him emperor, and Suetonius (*Nero*, 36) that Annius Vinicianus, son-in-law of Corbulo, headed a conspiracy, prepared and revealed at Beneventum. Aur. Victor (*de Cæs.*, 5) speaks also of many plots, and Henzen (*Scavi*, p. 21–22) quotes these words from the Arval tables for the year 66: . . . *ob detecta nefariorum consilia, providentiæ reddito sacrificio.* It must be borne in mind, however, that nothing is positively known concerning the conspiracy of Vinicianus, nor of its relation to the death of Corbulo.

[2] Bust in the Museum of the Louvre, found at Gabii in an ædiculum dedicated to the ancestors of the empress Domitia Longina, wife of Domitian and daughter of Corbulo.

[3] Suet., *Nero*, 32; Dion, lxii. 18.

demands after the conflagration of Rome have been already described. He found new resources when the time came. He went halves with those who took bribes, and permitted pillage on condition of sharing the spoils, and gave no orders without adding: "You know what I must have." Or else: "See that you leave nothing for any one."[1] And as he persecuted those generals whom the soldiers loved, he condemned those governors who were

Bas-relief of Pergamus.[2]

loved in the provinces, for example, Barea Soranus, the proconsul of Asia, who perished in 65, a victim to his own integrity, his talent, and to the affection which the people of Pergamus and of Ephesus bore towards him. It is a favourite theory to attribute revolutions to the fickleness of the populace, but how many governments have dug with their own hands the abysses into which they have disappeared!

Another cause of the ruin of the provinces was the journeys of the emperor, for he never travelled with less than 1,000 carriages. Fortunately, he never went out of Italy but once: that was shortly

[1] *Hoc agamus ne quis quicquam habeat* (Suet., *Nero*, 32).

[2] Fragment of the "Battle of the Giants," found in the recent excavations and now at Berlin.

after the arrival of Tiridates at Rome. This prince brought with him his children, those of his brothers, Pacorus and Vologeses, and his wife, who, to conceal her face, wore a helmet of gold instead of a veil. Three thousand Parthian knights and a numerous Roman escort formed an army to attend him. Thus accompanied he traversed Asia, Thrace, Greece, and Illyria, prolonging the journey from a superstitious dread of the sea,[1] ruining, as he passed, those cities to whom the honour of seeing an Armenian king within their walls cost in one day many years of their revenue.[2] He entered Italy by coasting the Adriatic, and reached Naples, where Nero was waiting, and, in his presence, Tiridates bowed the knee before him. A suspicious precaution recalls a custom of the Middle Ages: the descendant of Arsaces was not ordered to deliver up his sword before the interview, but it had been nailed in the scabbard. Great festivities were held at Naples, and also games in which Tiridates proved his skill in archery.[3]

Mounted Archer, from the Antonine Column.

Nero longed to show to the Romans, as his vassals, the son and brother of those who were called the kings of kings; he returned to Rome with his guest. The prætorian guard surrounded the Forum; he himself sat upon the Rostra in a curule chair, in

[1] According to the doctrine of the magicians, salt water is unclean (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, xxx. 17). He returned, however, by way of Brundusium and Dyrrachium.

[2] Suetonius (*Nero*, 30) says that the expenses were over 800,000 sesterces a day, which makes for all this journey, coming and going, during nine months, a total expenditure of about 200,000,000 sesterces. At his departure Nero presented him with 100,000,000 sesterces, according to Suetonius; 50,000,000 drachmas, according to Dion (lxiii. 6).

[3] Dion, lxiii. 7; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, xxx. 6.

triumphal costume, and surrounded by military standards. Tiridates mounted the steps of the Rostra and knelt before Nero, who took off his tiara and placed the diadem upon his head, while a former prætor explained the ceremony to the people and interpreted to them the prayers of the foreigner. They conducted him thence to the theatre, where the assembly saluted Nero with the title of *Imperator*. As was the custom after a great and decisive victory, he bore a laurel crown to the Capitol and closed the temple of Janus (66 A.D.).[1]

Temple of Janus closed.[2]

This festival, peaceful in character, but warlike in its aspect, awakened dreams of military glory and conquest. He hesitated between an expedition into Ethiopia, where he might have found the then undiscovered sources of the Nile, a war against the Parthians, to rival the glory of Alexander, or against the Albanians, to force the passes of the Caucasus, which no Roman general had as yet penetrated.[3] Thus his surfeited imagination tormented itself, his spirit hungered for the marvellous, because he could hope for no new sensation, except in the search for the unknown and the impossible.[4] A short time before he believed that the treasures of Dido were hidden in Africa, and he had ransacked the entire province to find them. He studied magic with enthusiasm, and when Tiridates arrived with his Chaldeans he asked them to reveal their secrets to him. Finding them only empty nothingness, he devoted himself afresh to those works which could be accomplished by human industry and which the eye could grasp; he asks himself which extreme of the world, that where the fires of Sirius burn or the icy regions of the Great Bear, shall behold his victorious eagles. He had already sent spies to the Caucasus, and two of his centurions had penetrated to the foot of those inaccessible rocks where the Nile plunges downwards into boundless

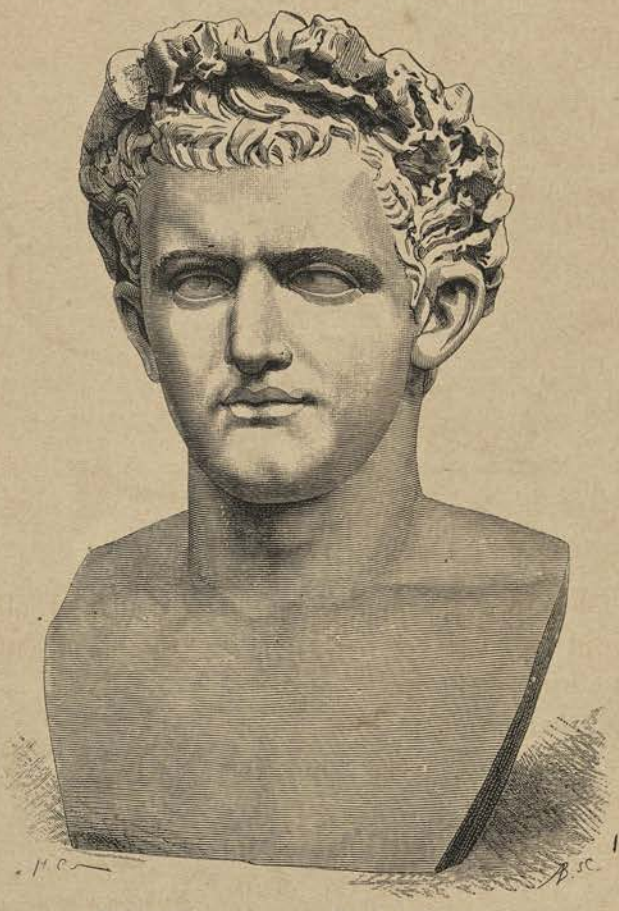
[1] Suet., *Nero*, 13. Tacitus does not seem to have been aware of this closing of the temple of Janus; but the information given by Suetonius is confirmed by coins. (Cf. Eckhel and Cohen.)

[2] Reverse of a large bronze coin of Nero, with the inscription: "Having re-established peace on sea and land, he closed the temple of Janus."

[3] Tac., *Hist.*, i. 6.

[4] Tacitus calls him: *incredibilium cupitor* (*Ann.*, xv. 42).

marshes.[1] If he still remains in Rome it is for the purpose of organizing his armies; the legions of Illyria, of Germany, and of Britain furnish its choicest men. Even Italy awakes at the sound of this martial zeal, and gives to its emperor a legion, every one of whose soldiers is six feet high; he calls it the phalanx of Alexander the Great.



Bust of Nero, crowned (Naples Museum).

He set out, but the army which now followed him bore neither spear nor buckler; harps take the place of swords, and the masks of actors are worn instead of helmets. It is an army of comedians following its leader; Greece was to be the theatre of its exploits. He was to appear there in all the games, and also to sing and drive the chariots (A.D. 67). He fell in the midst of the Olympic stadium; what matter? The Greeks spared him neither triumphs nor applause. They awarded him 1,800 crowns, and felled to the ground before him the statues of former victors. Sometimes he also felled his competitors to the ground: an actor at Corinth dared to dispute with him the attention of the public and the prize for singing; he ordered him to be strangled in the crowded theatre.

[1] Cf. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, vi. 13; Dion, lxiii. 8; Tac., *Hist.*, i. 6; Sen., *Quæst. Nat.*, vi. 8. His description of these marshes, which he gathered from the accounts of one of the centurions in answer to his inquiries, remains correct at the present time. Nero had also sent a Roman knight, for a commercial purpose, to the coasts of the North Sea and the Baltic, to buy up all the amber which could be found there. (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, xxxvii. 11.)

Victories like these among a people so renowned for art and taste delighted him greatly, and he wished to reward them royally; like Flamininus he declared the freedom of Greece, and read himself, during the Isthmian games at Corinth, that decree which Flamininus had proclaimed by the voice of a herald. He promised them a still greater service: he undertook to pierce the isthmus of Corinth. His prætorian soldiers, at the signal of a trumpet, struck the soil; with a golden pick-axe the emperor loosened a few shovelsful of earth, which he bore away in triumph. From all the isles the banished were summoned, and all the convicts were gathered from every province; Vespasian sent 6,000 Jewish prisoners to him. All death penalties were abrogated until the completion of the work.[2] But he soon grew weary of such activity; he consented that the canal be proclaimed an impossibility, and returned to his games and his festivities, intermingled with executions; then occurred the death of Corbulo. The parricide did not dare to be present at the Eleusinian mysteries, whence all blasphemers and criminals were excluded by the herald.[4] The Pythian oracles must have given him an unfavourable response, for he ordered a number of men to be massacred at Delphi, and their

Dancer on a Bronze Lamp.[1]

Medal commemorating the voyage of Nero in Greece.[3]

[1] Found at Pompeii (Naples Museum).

[2] This was the law in force concerning his canal from Misenum to Rome, which would have killed all the workmen in a different way, since it crossed the Pontine Marshes. [The work done by Nero at the isthmus was still traceable when it was resumed in 1884 by the Greek Government.—*Ed.*]

[3] Galley, with the inscription: "Arrival of Augustus." Small bronze.

[4] Suet., *Nero*, 34.

bodies to be thrown into the cave whence issued the prophetic vapour.[1] Apollo made haste to be reconciled to one who so maltreated his divinity, and an oracle, which conformed to the wishes of the prince, obtained for Pythia a gift of 100,000 drachmas.[2] In that age as in all others, men were to be found who were both wicked and superstitious, who alternately whipped or worshipped their gods. Nero, at the same time sceptical and devout, could have taken the part very naturally of that character in a comedy, who gets his thunderbolt repaired by a neighbouring tinker, and then shakes with fear at the rumblings of his mended machine. His sacrifices in the temples did not prevent him from pillaging them. He carried away 500 statues from Delphi and others from Olympia, and forced the Thespians to give up to him the Eros of Praxiteles:[4] in order to make good the loss of works of art destroyed by the fire in Rome in 67 he renewed the robberies of the first conquerors of Greece.

Eros (Museum of the Louvre).[3]

One of his freedmen, however, wrote him continually from

[1] Dion, lxiii. 14, and *Nero, or the Piercing of the Isthmus*, a diologue attributed to Lucian.

[2] Pausanias, x. 7, and v. 26.

[3] There are several replicas of the Eros of the Louvre, one at Dresden, at Rome, at the British Museum, etc., and it is probably a copy of the celebrated statue of Praxiteles. Many engraved gems represent Love in the same attitude. (Clarac, *Musée de Sculpt.*, pl. 282, No. 1,488.)

[4] Pausanias, ix. 27.

Rome that business demanded his presence imperatively. "Be convinced first of all," was the reply, "and repeat to me that I must only return worthy of Nero." "Upon his return, he entered Naples, the theatre of his *débuts*, in a chariot drawn by white horses, and after the privilege of the victors in the sacred games, through a breach made in the walls. It was the same at Antium, at Albanum, and at Rome. The Romans beheld him enter in the same car which was used in the triumph of Augustus, wearing a purple robe with a chlamys strewn with golden stars, the Olympic crown upon his head and bearing in his right hand that of the Pythian games. Before him also were borne in pomp others which he had gained, bearing inscriptions, signifying where they had been won, from whom, in what plays, and in what parts." Behind the chariot pressed the crowd of hired applauders, shouting, as if in an ovation, "that they were companions in his glory and soldiers of his triumph." An arcade of the Circus Maximus was torn down, and he directed his course through the Velabrum and the Forum towards the Palatine hill and the temple of Apollo. Victims were sacrificed everywhere along his course, the streets were strewn with saffron powder, and birds, ribbons, and cakes were scattered along the way. He hung the sacred crowns in his bed-chamber around his bed, filled his rooms with statues of himself representing him as a musician, and caused a medal to be struck on which he wore the same costume. In order to preserve his voice he addressed the soldiers by proxy, and whatever he did he kept his singing master continually with him, to advise him to take care of his lungs and to hold a piece of linen over his mouth.[1]

The freedman who had implored his master to return to Rome was right. The Empire had grown weary of obeying a "bad singer," as Vindex called Nero. A threatening agitation was brewing in the minds of men in the army and in the provinces. The Jews were in open revolt, and a large force had to be sent out against them. The Greek-speaking nations, long accustomed to despotism and to admire in silence the extravagance of their kings, gave no sign of discontent. The gift of liberty recently bestowed upon Achaia appeared to them of good omen; even Plutarch, half

[1] Suet., *Nero*, 25.

a century later, could only mention it with gratitude. Nero pleased them far better as a singer and musician, the friend of actors and athletes, as poet and charioteer in the stadium, than if he had been a serious, economical, and strict emperor. But through the West, where mythological recollections and Greek manners had no influence, there was nothing but scorn for the imperial mountebank, to whom anything might have been forgiven, except the abandonment of national customs. If Roman society could adapt itself to crime and vice, it demanded at least the guise of respect. Otho, the former husband of Poppæa, had been awaiting his hour of vengeance for ten years in Lusitania. The governor of Bætica listened to the warnings of Apollonius against the enemy of philosophers,[1] and the aged Galba, a kinsman of Livia, had become popular in Tarraconensis by annoying the collectors of the revenue in their exactions. In his prætorian camp were loud rumours concerning the senate and the Republic, and he who had refused the Empire upon the death of Caius, twenty-six years before, had grown bolder with age, as he had then less to risk; he collected all the oracles concerning an emperor who was to come from Spain; he gathered carefully together the portraits of the senators whom Nero had put to death, and he maintained secret relations with those who had been banished to the Balearic Islands. Great anger had been roused among the Gauls by a new census, and afterwards by the tribute exacted for the reconstruction of Rome. These provinces were so near to Italy that the inhabitants could almost see and hear those strange saturnalia of which Rome was the theatre. They had too recently become sharers of the Roman civilization, and had as yet too much of the Gallic nature left not to blush at the shameless vices which Nero paraded with such impunity upon the banks of the Tiber. Always eager for news, there were plenty of people to come and relate to them the infamous scenes of the House of Gold or the Neronian Games,[2] saying to them: "I saw your emperor acting on the stage, in company with other actors, with the cithera and the cothurnus, in buskin and mask. I saw him bound with cords and laden with

[1] Unless Philostratus (*Apoll.*, v. 10), in confounding men and places, meant to speak of Galba.

[2] Suet., *Galba*.

chains, raving in the madness of Orestes, or shrieking as Canace in the pangs of childbirth." [1] At tales like these their untamed souls would rise, and they grew ashamed to obey such a master, half woman and half jester.

Actor, wearing a Mask (Albani Villa, Rome).

Among those who brought back from Rome the deepest scorn and anger was the Aquitanian Julius Vindex, of royal blood, and at that time governor of Lugdunensis. He opened his heart to the Sequani, the Ædui, and the Arverni, and decided them to revolt against Nero. If in their discussions there was much said concerning the vices of the emperor, without doubt, there were some present who spoke concerning the inconvenience of the Empire,[2] and were becoming accustomed to that idea of separation which a year afterwards had entered into many minds. Vindex, in spite of his Gallic origin, was too much of a Roman to conceive anything beyond a change of administration or sovereign; his whole conduct shows this: he made his followers swear to be faithful to the senate and to the Roman people. But he would not have found so many Gauls ready to fight, if, to their scorn of Nero, had not been added secret hopes. The battle of Vesontium, where the armies of Gaul and of Rome rushed furiously

[1] Suet., *Nero*, 27–29, and Dion, lxiii. 22.

[2] See Tacitus (*Hist.*, iv. 14), the speech of Civilis, in which these significant words appear: *Gallias idem cupientes*, and also that of Vocula (*ibid.*, 57), giving the same name to the revolt of Sacrovir and that of Vindex. Plutarch (*Galba*) describes the whole of Gaul as involved in the movement and inclined to revolt, even after the death of Nero.

against each other, proves that Vindex, whether he wished it or not, was at the head of a national movement, and that the legions of Verginius Rufus, composed entirely of Romans, believed that by the slaughter of 20,000 Gauls they were putting an end to those who had rebelled against the Empire.

Before beginning his undertaking, Vindex wrote to several of the governors of the western provinces to obtain their support; among the rest, to Galba, who made no reply, but became a sharer in the rebellion by omitting to forward, like the rest, his despatches to Nero. Consequently, after Vindex had mustered a numerous army of volunteers, he addressed himself a second time to Galba: "Come, now is the time," said he; "come, make yourself leader of this powerful body of Gauls. We have now 100,000 men on foot, we will arm still more." Galba received this letter in Carthagena, and at the same time a message from the governor of Aquitania, who appealed for aid against the Gauls. He hesitated no longer, for he had just intercepted the order sent by Nero to the procurators to kill him[1] (April 2nd, 68): he raised a legion in his own province, which gave him two, created a sort of senate, a guard of horsemen, and spread proclamations throughout the country against the common enemy. Otho, the governor of Lusitania, gave to him vessels of gold and silver to be made into money.

"Nero was in Naples when he heard of the rising of the Gauls: it was on the anniversary of the murder of his mother (March 19th, 68). He received the news so indifferently that he was suspected to rejoice at an opportunity, through the right of war, of pillaging the richest provinces of the Empire. He went to the gymnasium, witnessed the combats of the athletes, and took great interest in their exercises. During supper the most alarming despatches were brought to him; then only did he break forth against the rebels in threats and curses. However, he waited eight days before replying to a single letter or giving any order; he did not allude to the event, and it seemed passed out of his memory.

"Disturbed at last by the frequent and dangerous proclamations of Vindex, he wrote to the senate, exhorting them to avenge their

[1] Suet., *Galba*, 9, and Aurelius Victor, *de Cæs.*, 5. Unless he had presupposed this order in justification of his revolt.

emperor and the Republic, excusing himself on account of a sore throat from coming to the Curia in person. Nothing offended him more in these manifestoes of the rebels than to be considered a bad singer. As for the other accusations, said he, their falsehood was well proved by the taunt which they flung at him, in ignorance of that art which he had cultivated with so much zeal and success; and he went about asking everybody 'if a greater artist than himself had ever been known.' Still the bearers of evil tidings came thick and fast; at last, seized with affright, he started for Rome. On the way an insignificant omen raised his courage: it was the bas-relief of a monument upon which was sculptured a Roman horseman dragging a conquered Gaul by the hair. At this sight he leaped for joy and gave thanks to heaven. At Rome he neither assembled the senate nor the people, but hastily held counsel with a few of the principal citizens, whom he had called together at his house, and spent the rest of the day in trying new musical instruments in their presence. He called their attention to the mechanism and workmanship of each, promising them that he should use them upon the stage, 'provided Vindex will give me leave.'

"When he learned that Galba and the Spaniards had also revolted he lost courage entirely, and falling to the ground remained there a long time like one half-dead. It has been said that at the first sound of the rebellion he wished to kill the governors of the provinces and the commanders of the armies, and leave the pillage of Gaul to the soldiery; to slay all the exiles and Gauls in the capital; to poison the senate at a banquet; to set fire to Rome, and in the midst of it to let the wild beasts loose upon the people, that they might not be able to protect themselves from the flames. As the impossibility of their execution diverted him from these plans, at last he decided to fight, but without any preparation for so important an expedition, for the most contrary feelings rapidly succeeded each other in this variable nature, at the same time ferocious and effeminate. His first wish was to kill, afterwards to expel the consuls, bear the fasces himself, and cross the Alps; he put a price upon the head of Vindex: offered a reward of 2,500,000 drachmas for his murder, to which Vindex made answer: 'If the head of Nero be brought to me I will

give him mine in exchange.' At other times he spoke of the power of his name, his face, and his tears. 'I will go forth,' he said, 'and show myself unarmed to the rebellious legions. My sorrow will bring them to repentance, and we shall thunder forth together a pæan of victory. I will compose it now.'"[1]

An unforeseen event seemed at first to restore his good fortune. Lyons, recently aided by Nero, took his part. That alone would have been sufficient reason for the neighbouring Viennese to join the opposite party, since they had long been jealous of the colony of Plancus, upon which all the imperial favour had been showered. They already held it in a state of siege. Lyons, still menaced by the Ædui and Sequani, allies of Vindex, called the legions of Upper Germany to its aid.

A soldier of fortune was at their head, Verginius Rufus, brave, capable, and without ambition. Intensely disgusted with the contemptible life of Nero, he still believed in the senate, the Roman people, and the law. He was terrified to think what evils would fall upon the Empire if the provinces and the armies should at any time discover that an emperor could be created outside of Rome. Belgica, which was not strongly attached to Nero, perceived with regret that central Gaul assumed the right to give a ruler to the world, and remained quiet. Verginius, untrammelled by that country, invaded the country of the Sequani and threatened Besançon. Vindex, having rushed forward to defend that city, demanded a conference. The two generals consulted long together, and since both were disinterested and both despised Nero, they soon came to an agreement in favour of a restoration of the Republic. But the legionaries who counted upon the spoils of the revolted cities, and to whom the names formerly so reverenced of senate and people signified nothing, in spite of their leaders, fell upon the Gauls, whom they held in great scorn, and 20,000 perished. Vindex, in despair, put an end to himself. Nero gained nothing by this victory; the victorious legions tore down his statues and wished to proclaim Verginius. Disregarding their menaces, he refused to return to Rome, and he had the strength

[1] I cannot say whether there be not more of caricature than history in this narrative of Suetonius. As anything might be expected of Nero, so anything could be said concerning him.

and the skill to control them until the arrival of certain news from Rome.

Great was the confusion there, and the Empire seemed to be on the verge of dissolution; the principle which had been up to this time the safeguard of its unity and life was about to fail: the legitimacy of the natural or adopted family of Augustus. Of the 108 who composed this family, thirty-nine, that is to say, more than one-third, had perished by violent deaths: a characteristic of an age when, as at the court of sultans, those who stand nearest the throne are also in the greatest danger. Nero was the last of the race; it would end with him; and as nothing had been foreseen for the succession to the sovereignty, there was no provincial governor too petty, no general too insignificant, to dream that he might become the founder of a new dynasty. In Lower Germany, Fonteius Capito incited his legions equally against Nero and against Galba. He commanded a man who had been accused and who had appealed to the emperor against his sentence to bring a higher seat, and sitting upon it himself said: "You are in the presence of the emperor now, speak," and condemned him to death. Claudius Macer, in Africa, resigning the imperial title of *legatus Augusti*, assumed the republican name of proprætor, and stopped all merchandise on the way to Rome, not so much to re-establish the Republic, as in the hope that the people might bestow the Empire upon whosoever would bring the famine to an end. Otho, in Lusitania, sustained Galba, who might in the future open the way to power. The legions of Illyria sent a deputation to Verginius, to offer to him their allegiance, and if the army of the East did not declare itself, it was because it had on

Legionary bearing the Image (*imaginarius*), from Trajan's Column.

Galley, upon a Silver Coin of Claudius Macer, Proprætor of Africa.

hand a most perplexing war. But it will not fail to observe these examples upon all sides, and will remember ere long that it is not alone in Rome that emperors may be made.[1]

Famine threatened the capital itself.[2] A ship arrived from Egypt; it was believed to be loaded with corn and the forerunner of a corn-bearing fleet; instead of which its cargo was of fine sand gathered on the shores of the Nile for the circus of the imperial palace! Anger and disgust took possession of the populace. Only the soldiers were left. One of the prefects of the prætorium, Tigellinus, entered into arrangement privately with a friend of Galba; the other, Nymphidius Sabinus, thought it possible for him, in the midst of this strange disorder, to make his way into the palace of the Cæsars. He dared not ask power for himself quite yet; but using to his own advantage the dissatisfaction of the prætorians against Nero, on account of his partiality towards his German guard, he persuaded them that the prince had fled; and to make the government of Galba an impossibility beforehand, he promised them in his name 30,000 sesterces each, a gratuity which the economical old man neither could nor would pay. He fancied that would enable him to bring himself forward and buy the Empire without difficulty. Thus fifty-four years after the death of Augustus his kingdom was being put up for auction.

So the provinces and the armies began to rise; the Roman people in their hunger and the prætorian guard were led away by a go-between who was only waiting his opportunity to act in his own interest. In this anarchy of opposing ambitions, one ancient name, one ancient right, violated a thousand times, but still in force, made the senate, if not the actual, at least the apparent, master of the situation. It was that power which Verginius invoked and whose lieutenant Galba called himself. Little accustomed as were the senators to act with resolution, the serious condition of things was soon to force them to awake from their torpor.

But what was Nero doing all the while? He beheld his succession disputed during his lifetime, "a disgrace to which no emperor had ever been subjected," he said himself, but which his

[1] *Evulgato imperii arcano, posse principem alibi quam Romæ fieri* (Tac., *Hist.*, i. 4).

[2] When the first corn-vessels which Vespasian sent from Alexandria arrived there was only corn enough left in Rome to last ten days.

baseness deserved. He wished to flee into Egypt, among the Parthians, or even to throw himself at Galba's feet. He endeavoured to persuade adventurers and tribunes to follow him, and appeared not to understand when one of them repeated to him these lines from one of his own parts: "Is it then so great a misfortune to cease living?" Every one refused and withdrew from him. The imperial palace became a solitude. Nero, abandoned by his courtiers, by his guard, called in vain to a gladiator to put him to death. No one answered. He was alone, alone with his crimes, his fears, and his cowardice: an agony more terrible than the violent death of others, because the soul soars higher and gains new strength for the last scene in the sight of the people. One of his freedmen, Phaon, took pity upon him and offered him his villa, four miles from Rome. When night came he left the palace. Emboldened by these tidings, the consuls convoked the senate, announced to it the flight of the prince, and requested it to proclaim him the public enemy. One of them was the poet Silius Italicus, the singer of the second Punic war. The Fathers, pleased that they were able to dare everything and yet risk nothing, used the prerogative which was gladly recognized to dispose of the Empire, and gave its support to that candidate whose chance of success seemed greatest—"the choice of Vindex." And still Nero fled. He left the palace on horseback, clothed in a tunic with his feet bare, covered with an old mantle, his head covered and face hidden by a handkerchief, with only four attendants. As he was passing by the prætorian camp he heard the shouts of the soldiers, who were uttering curses against him and good wishes for Galba. A passer-by said as he saw the little band: "Those men are in pursuit of Nero;" and another asked: "What is there new about Nero in Rome?" The stench of a corpse left in the road made his horse rear, and the handkerchief fell which covered his face; an old prætorian recognized him and saluted him by name. Reaching a cross-road he sent back the horses, and became entangled in a by-path so choked with thorns and brambles that he could not make his way through it, except by spreading his garments beneath his

Coin of Silius Italicus.[1]

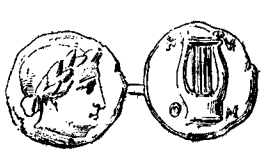
[1] Bronze coin cast at Doryleum: ΙΤΑΛΙΚΩ ΑΝΘΥΠΑΤΩ ΔΟΡΥΛΑΕΩΝ.

feet; thus, with difficulty, he reached the walls in the rear of the villa. There Phaon advised him to hide for a short time in a sand-pit; but he replied "that he did not wish to be buried alive." While waiting for a secret entrance to be effected into the villa he took up some water with his hands from a ditch, saying before he drank, "Thus does Nero refresh himself," and then fell to picking the thorns which had stuck to his coat. When the hole in the wall was completed he crept on his hands into the nearest chamber, where he lay down on a miserable mattress with a ragged coverlet. Hunger and thirst tormented him; coarse bread was offered him, which he refused, and tepid water, of which he drank a little.

"All who were present urged him to withdraw himself as quickly as possible from the outrages with which he was threatened. He ordered an excavation to be made in the ground large enough to receive his body, and pieces of marble to be used to line it, if any could be found, and water and wood to be made ready that the last honour should be paid to his corpse, weeping at every order which he gave, and constantly repeating: 'What an artist the world is about to lose!' During these preparations a courier arrived bringing a note to Phaon; Nero seized it and read therein that the senate had declared him an enemy to the State, and was causing him to be sought for that he might be punished according to the ancient laws. He inquired what was this punishment, and was told that the criminal was stripped and his neck held by a forked stick, and that he was beaten to death with rods. Alarmed, he seized two daggers that he had brought with him, tried their points, and replaced them in their sheath, saying: 'The fatal hour has not yet come.' Now he called upon Sporus to lament and weep for himself; again, he conjured some one, by dying, to give him the courage to die. At times he reproached himself for his own cowardice, saying: 'I drag out a miserable and shameful life;' and added in Greek: 'This is not becoming for Nero; no, this becomes him not. He must decide in such a moment; awake, Nero!' The horsemen who were to arrest him were now heard approaching. When the sound reached his ears he repeated, trembling, the line of Greek poetry: 'Of panting steeds I hear the rapid feet.'

And upon this, aided by his secretary, Epaphroditus, he plunged the dagger into his breast. He was still breathing when the centurion entered, and, feigning to have come to save him, sought to bind up the wound. 'It is too late,' Nero said to him; and added: 'Is this the promised faith?' Thus speaking he expired, his eyes remaining opened and fixed."[1] Icelus, Galba's freedman, permitted the body to be burned, the last rites being paid to the master of the world by his old nurse and by Acte, faithful to the memory of him whose first love she had been (June 9th, 68 A.D.).

This wretched end, this prolonged death-struggle, in which this self-indulgent man suffered all mortal pangs, in which the tyrant found no one to obey his last command, craving death at his servants' hands, was the legitimate expiation of a reign which had been the very saturnalia of power. In latter times an attempt had been made to rehabilitate Nero, and in England, the country of cold reason, but also the country of eccentricities, the question had been asked: "Was Nero really the monster that he is represented?" A contemporary, without hatred and without extravagance, has answered the question in advance: "Nero," says the elder Pliny, "was the enemy of the human race."[3]



Coin of Cythnos.[2]

But what was Nero's enemy? What was it that perverted this character to which nature had given some amiable qualities? It was the accession to absolute power at the age of sixteen. In private life, he would have been a man of elegant tastes, and might have lived long and happily; as absolute ruler, he died detested in his thirtieth year.

As it was, the memory of this grotesque buffoon, who had redeemed his crimes and vices by no great act in peace or war, did not perish with him. As he had not been publicly executed, many believed he was not dead, and his name was assumed by impostors.[4] In the year 69, a slave who resembled him passed

[1] Suet., 47–49. Cf. Dion, lxiii. 29; Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, iv. 9; Eutropius, vii. 9; Aurelius Victor, *Epit.*, v. 7. Cf. S. Augustine, *Civ. Dei*, v. 19; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, vii. 6.

[2] *Cabinet de France.*

[3] Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, vii. 6: *hostis generis humani!* Cf. *ibid.*, xxii. 46. Pliny, born in 23, was thirty-one years of age at the time of Nero's accession.

[4] Tacitus asserts that there were many (*Hist.*, ii. 8).

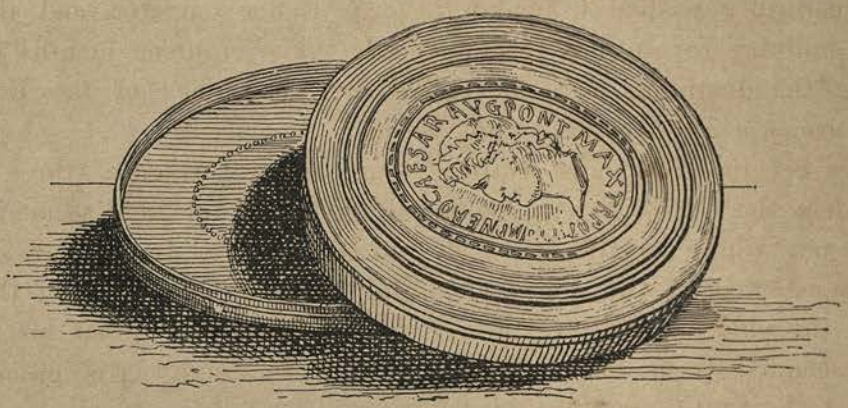
himself off for the late emperor at Cythnos, and produced great excitement in Greece and Asia. In the reign of Titus appeared another. "Twenty years later," says Suetonius, "in my youth, there was another false Nero, whom the Parthians received with delight, and who was given up to us only with much difficulty." Even at Rome, each year in the spring and on the 7th of June, his tomb was covered with flowers and wreaths; his image was furtively placed on the Rostra, and edicts were posted, announcing his speedy return and the vengeance which he should inflict. But this was an unhealthy popularity, as in the case of Catiline, and one by which history should not be deceived.[1]

A still more strange idea was that which the *Apocalypse*, composed shortly after his death, spread abroad in the Church: Nero was to appear again at the end of the world as Antichrist.[2] In the eleventh century the imagination of dwellers in Rome was still haunted by the phantom of the first persecuting emperor. His ghost, it was thought, lingered about Monte Pincio, and to put an end to these terrors the church of Santa Maria del Popolo was erected.

[1] Some deception has existed on this question of Nero's popularity, which was exhibited only by certain interested persons, and has been employed in literature. Cf. Suet., *Nero*, 57: *Obiit . . . . tantumque gaudium publice præbuit ut plebs pileata tota urbe discurreret.* Cf. Plutarch, *Galba.*

[2] Cythnos, where the first of the false Neros appeared, was not far from Patmos, where S. John at this time was writing his *Apocalypse.* See the curious study of M. Renan, *l'Apocalypse,* in which that learned author manifests, in my judgment, too much indulgence for Nero.

[3] *Cabinet de France,* No. 3,139.



Bronze Mirror-Box, adorned with a Coin of Nero, the reverse bearing the head of the Goddess Roma.[3]

CHAPTER LXXVI.

THREE EMPERORS IN EIGHTEEN MONTHS (JUNE 68—DECEMBER 69 A.D.).

I.—Galba.

TIBERIUS had placed the government under the protection of the prætorians. With an imperial family dying out, an aristocracy whose blood, whose courage even, was exhausted, with a populace composed of the dregs of the world, the soldiers quickly realized their power. Sejanus had given them the means of knowing their numerical power and acting in concert, by establishing them at the gates of the city, in a camp like a fortress, whence they could safely defy the anger of an unarmed populace, and rule the senate by the fear of the sword. Already they had sold the Empire to Claudius, and hoped to sell it again to Galba. The idle soldiers of the prætorium could not, however, expect to keep for themselves alone so lucrative a privilege. So long as their candidate was a Cæsar the legions accepted him; but when this family was extinct, each army not unnaturally wished to make its own leader emperor, and the era of military revolutions recommenced. The eighteen months following the death of Nero were like the worst days of the Republic —*annum reipublicæ prope supremum.*

Galba
(Gold Coin).

Servius Sulpicius Galba, born near Terracina, three years before the Christian era, belonged to one of the noblest families of Rome, whose origin could be traced back to Jupiter, at least so he asserted in the genealogical table which he set up in the hall of the palace. Still further, it was there recorded that his mother descended from Pasiphaë, daughter of the sun. His grandfather had shown literary tastes. It was perhaps he who possessed the

beautiful statue of Sophocles which was discovered in our own times at Terracina.

Galba had been governor of Aquitania and Upper Germany, afterwards proconsul of Africa. The pacification of this latter province gained for him the triumphal ornaments and several priesthoods, after which he lived in retirement until the middle of Nero's reign. About the year 60 A.D. the emperor sent him to Tarraconensis, which he governed eight years. He was at first, there as elsewhere, vigilant and severe. Thus, he ordered the hands of a dishonest money-changer to be cut off and nailed to his counter; he condemned to crucifixion a guardian for poisoning a ward whose legatee he was, and when the criminal pleaded his rights as a Roman citizen he had erected for him a cross painted white and very much higher than the rest. But fear of giving offence to Nero soon lessened his zeal: "Inaction is better," said he; "one cannot be called to account for what one has not done."

Sophocles, discovered at Terracina (Lateran Museum).

However, when he saw that Nero was losing ground, he himself strove to become popular, and the letters of Vindex found him ready. On the 2nd of April, 68 A.D., from his tribunal, where he had placed pictures of the tyrant's victims and a child, son of an exile whom he had recalled from the Balearic Isles, he recounted to the assembled troops the crimes of Nero, the horrors of his

reign, and was interrupted by their acclamations saluting him emperor.

He was seventy-three years old and disabled with gout; it was, indeed, late to begin so rough a journey. But these Romans, thorough sceptics though they were, were also superstitious in the extreme, for it was not conviction but contempt which had slain their gods. The former inhabitants of Olympus had deserted it to give place to an inexorable deity, Fate, whose will was revealed through omens; a thousand omens had foretold for Galba a brilliant fortune: for fifty years he had looked for it, and would have looked for it longer still. Nevertheless, on learning the death of Vindex he thought himself lost and meditated suicide. His friends restrained him; very soon his freedman Icelus, who had travelled from Rome in seven days, informed him of Nero's death and that the senate recognized the election of the legions of Spain. All were agreed in selecting this old man, who had not long to live, and whose heir each one hoped to be.

Libertati (Citizen wearing the liberty cap). Silver Coin.

Libertas publica (reverse of a Coin of Galba).

During the disorders of the previous reign the idea of a restoration of the Republic had been secretly agitated. The senators quickly rallied to a scheme which gave the power to them. With the death of Nero their confidence increased. A medal of Brutus, engraved with the famous legend, *Libertas P. R. restituta*, was exhibited. That was but an alarming threat; much more serious was the resumption of the sovereign right, which Augustus had taken from them, of issuing gold and silver coinage. Their pieces bore neither the name nor effigy of Galba, whom they wished to reduce to the simple position of a mere military commander. At first Galba encouraged these hopes. He declared himself to be only the lieutenant of the senate and people; on the coins which he struck along his route through Spain and Gaul he neither put his picture nor took the title of Augustus; the old republican title of *imperator* alone is to be read there. His uncertainty as to the intentions of the different armies dictated this reserve. But the senators, intimidated by the prætorians, rested satisfied with their innocent monetary manifestation, and without exacting further pledges sent

their oaths of allegiance as far as Narbo. At the same time he learned that Verginius firmly refused the Empire; that it was not offered to Fonteius Capito, and that the army of Germany, after some hesitation, had promised obedience to the choice of the legions of Spain. He then assumed the title of Cæsar and the state of an emperor. The restoration of the Republic had been a dream and nothing more.

Galba *imperator* (Silver Coin).

Before leaving his province he had all the procurators of Nero, with their wives and children, killed, and had punished several tribes whose submission was tardy. In the two Gauls he bestowed citizenship upon all the allies of Vindex and remitted a quarter of the tribute; but cities which, like those of Belgica, had showed themselves hostile or lukewarm, were deprived of part of their territory, charged with new taxes, or condemned to raze their walls. Rheims, Trèves, and Langres received the worst treatment; he confiscated the revenues of Lyons, while heaping favours upon Vienne:[1] rewards and punishments equally ill-judged, since they created in Gaul two factions, the conquerors and the conquered. From being the choice of the Empire, brought into power by the universal reprobation of Nero, Galba became merely the leader of a party.

At Rome, Nymphidius, prefect of the prætorium, governed in the name of the new prince. This functionary had taken the most prominent part in the fall of Nero, and expected that the grateful Galba would continue him in office and power; he aimed even higher, called himself the son of Caligula, though his father was probably a gladiator, and dreamed of the Empire in spite of his friends, who said to him: "Who in Rome would consent to call you Cæsar?" He was killed by the guards, whom he tried to stir into revolt when he found his command given by Galba to Cornelius Laco. Galba searched carefully for his accomplices, real or supposed, and had them executed without trial; among them were a consul-elect, an ex-consul, and Mithridates, former king of Pontus. As he drew near the city, towards the end of December, the naval force, hastening to meet him, demanded the confirmation

[1] Steininger (*Gesch. des Trev.*, p. 83) thinks even that Galba sent to Trèves a colony, for whose establishment the former inhabitants of the city and some neighbouring tribes were obliged to give up their land.

of their title of legion, given them by Nero; he rejected their entreaties, and when they resolutely demanded their eagle and their flags, he ordered them to be ridden down by his cavalry and decimated; a great many perished.[1]

The reaction quickly took the form of a persecution of the friends of Nero. Galba sent to punishment his freedmen, also the famous Locusta; recalled the exiles from banishment, and authorized the prosecution of informers. This was justice and men applauded; he revoked, however, the gifts of the late prince, amounting to not less than £21,740,000,[2] and he commissioned thirty knights to prosecute for its recovery in Rome and throughout the Empire. The Hellanodicæ of Olympia were condemned to restore 250,000 drachmas, the Pythia of Delphi, 100,000; the popularity of Nero among the Greeks became all the greater for this. A tenth only of what had been received was left; if actors or wrestlers had sold their presents, they were recovered from the purchasers: these executions brought in little money and much hate. He granted for a time the remission of the tax of the fortieth on imported articles; but this passing reduction was no equivalent to the court and the populace for the magnificent prodigality of Nero. Galba's economy, though necessary, seemed sordid, and caused him to be satirized at the theatre.[3] The principal citizens, from whose number the judges

Coin of Galba, commemorative of the Remission of the Tax of the Fortieth (Bronze).

[1] Nevertheless, later on, he gave to the naval force the title *First Adjutrix*. There exists a commission granted by him on the 22nd of December, 68 A.D., to the veterans of this legion. Borghesi, *Œuvres*, iv. 204 *sq.* See also the learned book of M. Ferrero, *l'Ordinamento della armate romane*, 1878.

[2] Tac., *Hist.*, 20. Two thousand two hundred million of sesterces.

[3] Suetonius relates (*Galba*, 12) that Tarragona having presented him with a golden crown, weighing 15 pounds, he immediately had it melted and demanded 3 ounces more, the bullion having fallen short to this amount. A renowned musician came to play for him during supper. Galba gave him 5 denarii, calling his attention to the fact that he gave from his own purse, not from that of the public. Plutarch says, however, that the pieces were gold (125 francs).

were appointed, asked for the addition of a sixth decury as aid to the five already existing; he refused it, and abolished their winter recess as well as that of the beginning of the year. The army was treated no better. The German guard, renowned for its fidelity to the emperors, was disbanded without pay, and the prætorians claiming the largess promised by Nymphidius, he replied, "I enlist soldiers; I do not buy them."[1] Many tribunes were dismissed; there were also removals from the city cohorts and night watch; all felt themselves menaced.

A rigorous government following upon a lax administration might have been accepted. The policy was dangerous; yet, if carried out with firmness and ability, it would have been useful; but this very strict prince had his weaknesses. He was entirely under the influence of three men: Titus Vinius, his lieutenant in Spain; Laco, his prefect of the prætorium; and the freeman Icelus. They were to be seen—

Tous trois à l'envi s'empresser ardemment
A qui dévorerait ce règne d'un moment.[2]

Galba allowed them to sell offices and favours. Everything was to be bought, the levying of taxes or their exemptions, pardons or punishments. The entire city demanded the death of the infamous Tigellinus, Nero's principal counsellor; but Tigellinus had bought the protection of Vinius, and Galba administered a severe reprimand to the people base enough to desire the life of a man who was soon to be deprived of it by sickness. While the people were reading this magnanimous edict Tigellinus was celebrating by a brilliant *fête* the marriage of his daughter to Vinius.

Apparently the old emperor prospered in everything. Two competitors, Fonteius Capito in Lower Germany and Claudius Macer in Africa, had been killed; Vespasian sent his oath of allegiance and that of Mucianus, governor of Syria; his son Titus, who brought them, having already reached Corinth, this submission rendered useless the assassins whom Galba had sent into the province.[3] Verginius Rufus, whose crime it was to have deserved and to have

[1] The sum promised by Nymphidius, 7,500 drachmas to each soldier of the prætorian and city cohorts, and 1,250 to each legionary of the twenty-eight legions (Plutarch, *Galba*, 2), would have amounted to 12,000,000 or 16,000,000 pounds sterling.

[2] Corneille, *Otho*, act i. scene 1.

[3] Suet., *Galba*, 23.

refused the Empire,[1] had been persuaded to come to Rome. Gaul and Spain were devoted; the legions of Illyria, ordered into Italy by Nero, had returned to their camps; those of Upper Germany alone, who had received no recompense for their campaign against Vindex, showed active discontent. Deputies from the Belgian cities, ill-treated by Galba, crowded into the camps in mourning garments, and recalling to the soldiers their unrequited services, incited them to avenge at one and the same time the wrongs of half of Gaul and the humiliation of their eagles.[2] When they learned that at Rome the prætorians also had reason to complain, that the people regretted Nero, and that the senate was disaffected towards the new prince, they refused to obey him. On the Calends of January, 69 A.D. (January 1st), they took oath to the senate alone, their secret messengers having just said to the prætorians: "We do not wish the emperor elected in Spain; make a choice yourselves which all the armies can approve." This defection hastened the resolution, already taken by Galba, to announce his heir. He hesitated between Otho, who had early been associated with his fortunes, and Piso, whom he had long ago made the legal heir of his wealth and his name. The former had been guilty of a youth of dissipation, but he had made himself beloved in his province, and age and misfortune might have changed him for the better. In addition he had just ruined himself for Galba, and nothing less than an Empire could free him from his creditors;[3] at that moment he owed 5,000,000 of drachmas. Piso affected austerity; Galba was pleased by this and chose him (12th January, 69 A.D.).

To choose this young man of austere character[4] was a challenge to this society, too fond of its vices to wish a Cato on

[1] He lived thirty years longer in the enjoyment of public esteem, and only died under Nerva. Tacitus, then consul, delivered his funeral oration, and Pliny the younger has preserved for us his epitaph:

Hic situs est Rufus pulso qui Vindice quondam
Imperium adseruit non sibi sed patriæ.

[2] *Ipsius exercitus pericula et contumelias conquerentes* (Tac., *Hist.*, i. 54).

[3] *Nisi principem, se stare non posse* (Suet., *Otho*, 5).

[4] *Ingenio trucem et longo exsilio efferatum* (Tac., *Hist.*, i. 21). The adoption was made without any legal formalities. Severus still further defied them afterwards, when he had himself adopted by a dead man. (See chapter xc.)

the throne. This challenge was accepted by Otho and the prætorians. In his presentation to them of Piso, Galba had been brief and imperious. He came to tell them, he said, that following

Galba (Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 18).

the example of Augustus he had adopted a son, and that he had chosen Piso, as in war brave men band together; that the fourth and twenty-second legions had revolted, but that soon they would

be reduced to order. In this manner a new emperor was presented to them, a civil war announced, and for the second time the prince forgot the largess! "It is certain," says Tacitus, "that the least liberality would have kept the soldiers to their duty; he was ruined by this antique austerity and sternness too great for our habits."

Two soldiers, Proculus and Veturius, both subaltern officers, undertook to transfer the Empire, and did transfer it. They knew the secrets of Otho, and received from him counsel and money. From the time of his first arrival in Rome he had endeavoured to stir up the prætorian cohorts and the other troops then united in the city in larger numbers than had ever before been seen. There were present the legion which came from Spain with Galba, the auxiliaries, and the corps raised by Nero from Britain and the banks of the Rhine and Danube in view of his expedition to the Caspian gates, which he had called to Rome against Vindex. The liberality of Otho was known; whenever he received the emperor at supper he had distributed to the cohort of the guard 100 sesterces a head, to serve them, he said, as rations; and to these public gifts he added many in secret. Learning one day that a prætorian was at strife with a neighbouring landowner in regard to the boundaries of a field, he bought the entire field and gave it to him. By such conduct, which the soldiers compared with the stinginess of the emperor, Otho quickly gained a party. He would have been proclaimed upon the evening of the fourth day following the adoption of Piso, had he not feared the tumult and confusion of the night. On the morrow his freedman Onomastus, having assembled some soldiers, sought him in the presence of Galba, who was sacrificing before the temple of Apollo, and to whom the soothsayer foretold an approaching danger. Under pretext of an appointment with some architects, Otho left him and found at the Golden Milestone twenty-three soldiers, who saluted him emperor, drew their swords, and bore him to the camp. The tribune of the guard, either intimidated or an accomplice, allowed this handful of men to pass; their comrades crowded round them, the air rang with applause, and Otho was master of the Roman world.

In the meantime Galba, intent upon sacrifice, was wearying with prayers the gods of an Empire which even then was gone

from him. When rumour of what was happening reached the palace, Piso harangued the prætorian guard, which seemed to listen to him; but the rest of the troops repulsed with javelins the messengers sent to them, and the naval legion repaired to the camp of the prætorians; one German cohort alone remained faithful. At one time the rumour ran that Otho had been killed; senators and knights, a moment before trembling and silent, came flocking to offer their services, and complaining that a great criminal had escaped their justice. This decided Galba to leave his palace, where he was preparing to defend himself. Mounted in a litter he advanced through the surging throng which, uneasy and in "the silence of great rage or terror," witnessed this tragedy, whose end was not yet foreseen.

Military Address.[1]

Galba crowned with Laurel.[2]

A soldier came forward with a bloody sword, boasting that he had slain Otho. "Who ordered you to do so?" asked the severe old emperor. Otho was not, however, dead. The prætorians, having placed him in the midst of the eagles, upon the tribunal from whence they had thrown down the gilded statue of Galba, surrounded him, and allowed neither tribunes nor centurions to approach. They seized each soldier as he came, embraced him, led him to the standards, and dictated to him a form of oath, which in turn commended the emperor to the soldiers and the soldiers to the emperor. He, on his side, with hands stretched toward the crowd, sent kisses, bowed obsequiously, and, adds Tacitus, "in order to become master, aped the meekness of a slave." As soon as he considered the audience

[1] Reverse of a large bronze of Galba.

[2] Engraved stone of the *Cabinet de France*, No. 2,086 (sardonyx of three layers, 29 mill. by 22).

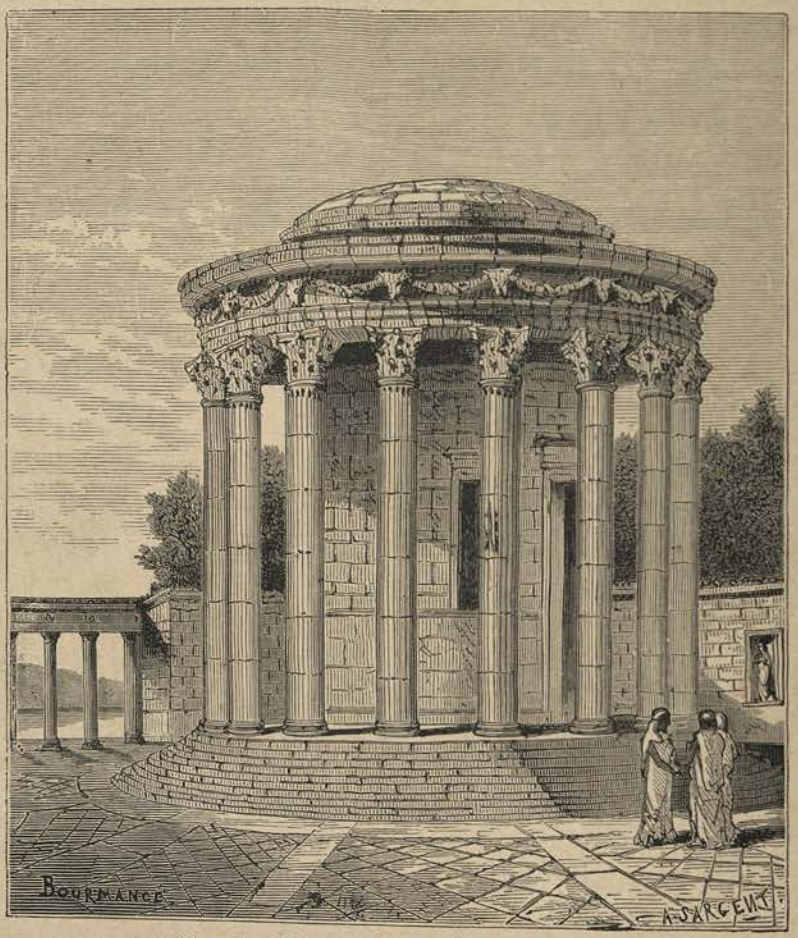
sufficiently numerous, Otho spoke. The substance of his discourse was this, that he would retain only so much power as they might wish him to keep.[1] He then ordered the arsenals to be opened, and this troop riotously left the camp. As soon as the cohort which preceded Galba saw them, the standard-bearer tore down the image of the emperor and threw it upon the ground. This was the signal for defection. Some javelins thrown at random dispersed the crowd; the Forum was instantly deserted, and Galba's bearers, charged by a few horsemen, let fall his litter, and the old man tumbled to the ground. "Different stories are told of what he said when dying. According to some, he asked in a pleading voice what evil he had done, and demanded a few days in order to pay the *donativum*. The majority say that he bared his head to the murderers, exhorting them to strike if it was for the good of the State. One soldier plunged his sword into his throat; the others fell upon the corpse and tore it in pieces. Tacitus paints him in an epigram: 'Superior to a private station, while he remained in it; and, in the judgment of all, worthy of the Empire, if he had not been emperor.'"

Galba (Bust of the Museum of the Louvre, No. 275).

Piso was saved from the first fury of the assailants by the

[1] Suetonius, *Otho*, 6. This speech was much more in keeping with the situation than the discourse put by Tacitus into his mouth.

devotion of a centurion, and concealed himself in the temple of Vesta, where he was soon discovered and massacred. Vinius had been killed before, and the three heads upon pikes were borne among the standards of the cohorts, near the legion's eagle (16th



Temple of Vesta (Restoration by Coussin).

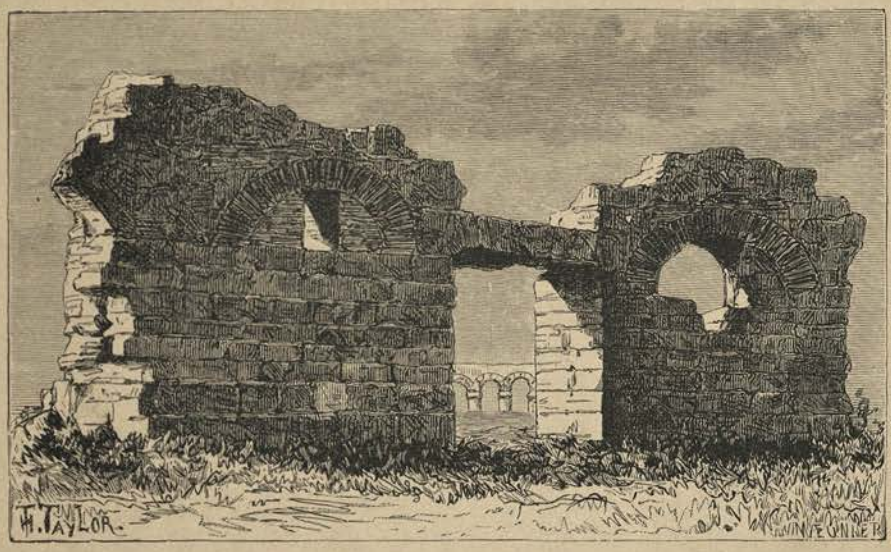
January, 69 A.D.). Later Vitellius found petitions demanding the price of blood from 120 persons; he had them all executed.[1]

Piso had been emperor four days, Cæsar and Galba seven months; Otho was to reign eighty-eight days.

[1] Tac., *Hist.*, i. 41. Cf. Suetonius and Plutarch, *Life of Galba*. Dion (lxiv. 6) says that many people perished with Galba, ἄλλοι συχνοί. It is not probable.

II.—Otho.

Marcus Salvius Otho, born in Rome, April 28th, 32 A.D., the descendant of an old Etruscan family of Ferentinum, came to power with a very bad reputation. The lower classes thought they had another Nero, and saluted him by that prince's name, whose statues he allowed to be set up again, and whose intendants he restored to office, at the same time appropriating 50,000,000 sesterces to finish the Golden House. As he had killed Galba,



Ruins of the Theatre of Ferentinum.

he found it necessary to honour the memory of him whom he seemed to have avenged. He had behaved with moderation in Lusitania for ten years, and at Rome his first acts were praiseworthy. He did, indeed, allow the prætorians to choose their prefects, and to give Sabinus, the brother of Vespasian, the prefecture of Rome, in other words, to lay hands on the civil power. But he checked their zeal for massacre and pillage, and gave up to them only the three ministers of his predecessor. They wished to murder Marius Celsus, consul-elect and one of Galba's most zealous partisans. Otho, in order to save him, feigned great wrath and had him loaded with chains; a few days after he gave him

an important command, and numbered him among his dearest friends. The soldiers demanded the suppression of the tax paid by them to the centurions for furloughs; these dues he retained, but had them paid from the treasury. "An expedient middle course," says Tacitus, "always taken by wise princes."[1] Very many had spoken against him in the senate, but he seemed to have forgotten it all, surrendering to the public hatred Tigellinus only, who died like a coward.

There was no time for him to do more, for already he had a rival. After the murder of Fonteius Capito, Galba had sent a new general of no distinction, Vitellius, to the legions of Lower Germany.[2] He was of very mean birth, a fact which did not prevent the genealogists from tracing his descent to Faunus, king of the early inhabitants of Latium, and a Sabine divinity, Vitellia. His grandfather, a Roman knight of Nuceria, and procurator under Augustus, was the first of the family known to fame; but his father had been censor, and under Claudius second in rank in the Empire. For his own part, brought up at Capri with Tiberius, and favourite of Caligula, he had no experience of war; and of the two great offices he had administered, the proconsulate of Africa and the stewardship of public works, he had left the first with a good reputation, the second with the name of a shameless robber, having even, it was said, appropriated the votive offerings in many of the Roman temples, and put copper and tin in the place of gold and silver. These thefts had not repaired his fortune, which was wrecked by debauchery, and Suetonius accuses him of having poisoned his own son in order to inherit his property. On every side he was beset by creditors, and, like Otho, his only refuge was the Empire. Vinius, whose good graces he had obtained by favouring the faction of the blues at the circus, proposed him to the prince as commander of the turbulent legions of Lower Germany. His common manners and prodigality, with the neglect of every military regulation, would have won the soldiers to him in a few days. We have seen, however, that the outbreak began with the former legions of Verginius, but that they proclaimed no

[1] *Hist.*, i. 46.

[2] Aulus Vitellius, born in Rome, on the 7th or 24th September, of the year 15. (Suet., *Vitell.*, 3.)

emperor. Not that they were republicans; for they had shown at the battle of Vesontio that they wished to keep at the head of the State a military chief, who for many reasons suited the army

Otho (Bust of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 19).

better than an assembly of old politicians. But there was no one in the camp upon whose shoulders they could cast the purple. Their commander, Hordeonius, was an old man crippled with gout,

and while waiting for a candidate to appear they refused obedience to the other old man of the Palatine, who seemed to them merely the emperor of the senate.

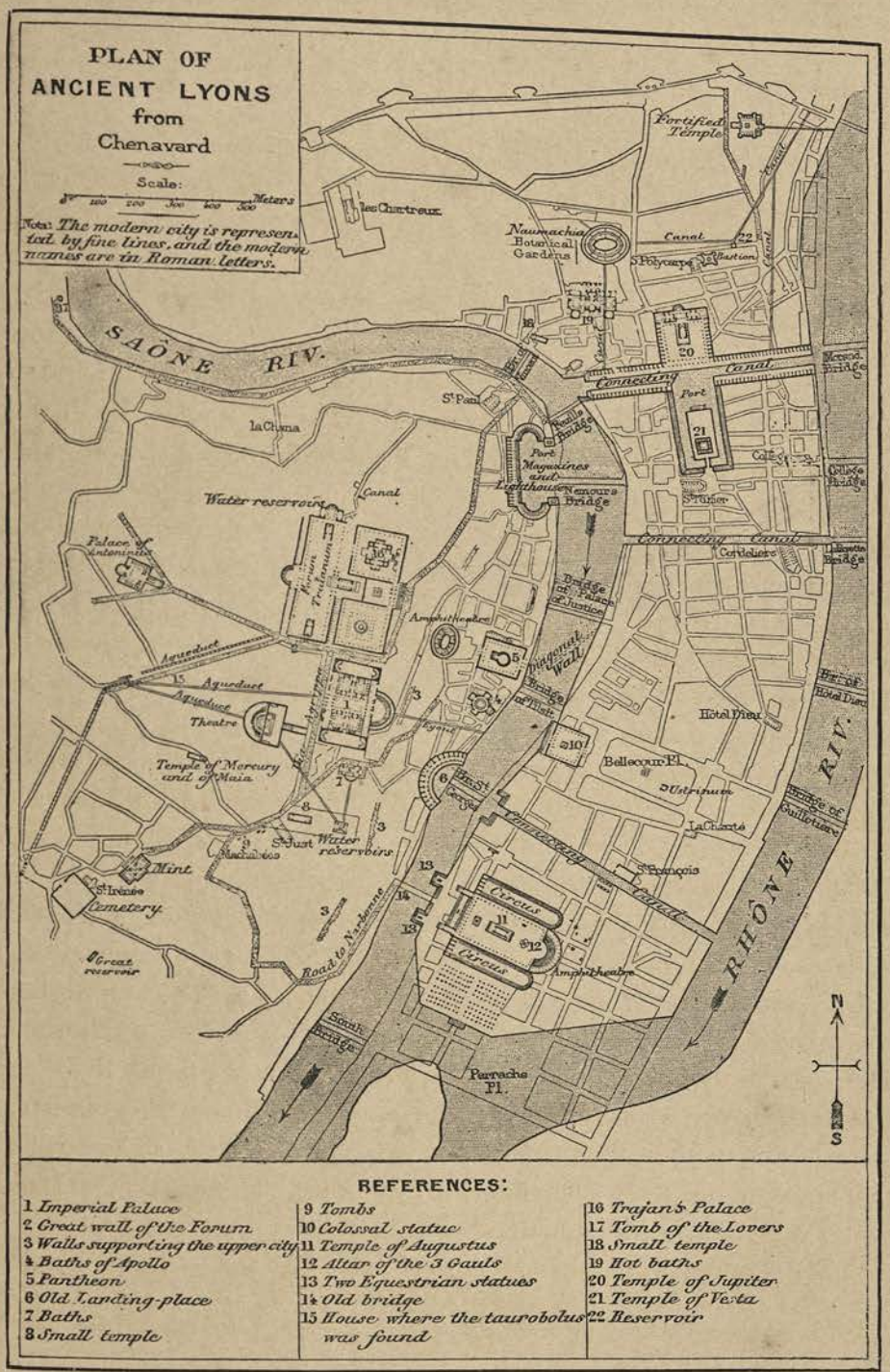
Valens, legate of one of the legions of Lower Germany, had killed Capito, perhaps to remove a witness of his own abortive intrigues; he thought himself ill-paid for this service, and urged Vitellius to seize on the fortune which lay open to him. The ruined general hesitated no longer when he learned that the legions at Mayence had broken the images of Galba. "You must either," said he to the soldiers, "march against your comrades and begin war, or choose another prince." Valens replied by hailing him as emperor. Cæcina, another legate whom Galba was prosecuting for his extortions, easily persuaded the army of Upper Germany to recognize this election. That of Britain followed this example, which was in turn imitated by the First Italic Legion encamped at Lyons. This made eleven legions,[1] more than a third of the forces of the Empire and the most famous troops,[2] in revolt. The more aged of the soldiers (*senes*) and the auxiliaries were left in the Rhine camps, so that the frontier should not seem abandoned to the barbarians, and from the whole of the active troops three armies were formed. One of 40,000 men, under the command of Valens, marched on Italy by the Cottian Alps;[3] the second, of 30,000, under Cæcina, was to cross the Pennine Alps; Vitellius was to follow with the third. The Germans and Belgians vied with each other in furnishing auxiliaries. Cologne, Langres, and Trèves offered men, horses, arms, and money. The enthusiasm was general, as if Belgic Gaul was about to recover its freedom. The same zeal existed among the soldiers; they brought their pay and their costly arms to supply the campaign fund; they insisted, spite of the winter, upon marching and crossing the mountains in the midst of ice. So rich did Italy appear! It was the promised booty, and they could plunder Gaul on the way.

The armies were already on the march when Otho's accession

[1] Four in Lower Germany, three in Upper, as many in Brittany, and that of Lyons. There were then thirty legions, without counting an equal number of auxiliaries, formed into cavalry and cohorts.

[2] *Magna per provincias Germanici exercitus fama* (Tac., *Hist.*, ii. 58).

[3] The army which passed by *Lucus Augusti*, Luc, on the Drome, must have crossed either Mount Cenis or Mount Genèvre. (Tac., *Hist.*, i. 66.)



REFERENCES:

1 *Imperial Palace*
2 *Great wall of the Forum*
3 *Walls supporting the upper city*
4 *Baths of Apollo*
5 *Pantheon*
6 *Old Landing-place*
7 *Baths*
8 *Small temple*
9 *Tombs*
10 *Colossal statue*
11 *Temple of Augustus*
12 *Altar of the 3 Gauls*
13 *Two Equestrian statues*
14 *Old bridge*
15 *House where the taurobolus was found*
16 *Trajan's Palace*
17 *Tomb of the Lovers*
18 *Small temple*
19 *Hot baths*
20 *Temple of Jupiter*
21 *Temple of Vesta*
22 *Reservoir*

Plan of Ancient Lyons (after Chenavard).

became known. Having revolted under Galba, they continued their revolt under his successor. What mattered the motive of the war? What they wished was war itself. The two princes exchanged words of peace at first, then threats, and ended by despatching assassins against each other.[1] Otho, master of Italy and Africa, recognized by the legions of Illyricum and the East,[2] governed Rome as if at peace while yet preparing rapidly for war. He confirmed in their offices all those to whom Nero and Galba had made promises, recalled those in banishment, did not remove L. Vitellius, his rival's brother, and contented himself with sending Cornelius Dolabella, whom many regarded as a candidate for the Empire,[3] to Aquinum. To secure the favour of the provinces he divided the consulship between Verginius and Vobiscus, a noble of Vienne. He gave citizenship to the Lingones, sent fresh colonists to Hispalis and Emerita, and bestowed privileges on Africa and Cappadocia; he also extended the right of jurisdiction of Bætica[4] over Mauretania—a favour to one, a punishment to the other. He could also boast of a victory over the enemies of the State. Nine thousand Roxolanian horsemen who had invaded Mœsia were cut in pieces to the last man, and he had just quelled a sedition of the prætorians, which, however, was not directed against him, for, believing him menaced by the senators, they had hastened under arms to his palace, with the outcry that there was no safety for him while the senate existed. This riot furnished him with an occasion for delivering a grand eulogy on "this assembly which had maintained itself from the kings to the emperors, a body indestructible, immortal, which it was their duty to transmit to their descendants intact as they had received it from their fathers."

Otho Emperor (Gold Coin).

It suited Otho's part well to recall the law to these rioters and to extol to them the senate; unfortunately he had purchased permission to speak thus moderately by a gift of 5,000 sesterces

[1] Suet., *Otho*, 8; Plutarch, *Otho*, 4; Tac., *Hist.*, i. 74–5.

[2] The Asiatic legions had sent to the prætorians two clasped hands as *signa* of peace. (Tac., *Hist.*, ii. 8.)

[3] Galba had disbanded the German guard as being devoted to him. (Suet., *Galba*, 12.)

[4] *Provinciæ Bæticæ Maurorum civitates dono dedit* (Tac., *Hist.*, i. 78).

to each soldier. It must, however, always be remembered in his favour, as opposed to the abuse of power already shown by his rival. "Vitellius made use of his new elevation," says Tacitus, "only to squander in advance the revenues of the Empire in low profligacy and extravagant banquets. By noon he was always drunk and heavy with eating." To this add a pride which caused him to disdain the name of Cæsar, and he was scarcely willing to accept that of Augustus; he preferred to be called Germanicus. It was indeed barbarians, Germans and Gauls, whom he led to the sack of Rome; Cæcina, his general, wore their costume, and received deputations from the senates of Italy attired in the variegated blouse of a Cheruscan and the breeches of a Batavian.[1] The havoc committed by his troops upon the route was terrible: at Divodurum (Metz) they killed 4,000 men, "which spread such terror throughout Gaul that there was no city which at the approach of the army did not go out in a body, headed by its magistrates, to meet the soldiers and beg for mercy. Women and children prostrated themselves upon the highways, and nothing which could disarm a furious enemy was omitted by these tribes, trying in time of peace to obtain the favour of not being treated as if engaged in war."[2] At Langres, a friendly city, took place a bloody conflict between the legionaries and eight cohorts of Batavian auxiliaries. A pretext for war was vainly sought on the Æduan territory; in addition to the money and arms exacted, this tribe furnished provisions gratuitously. Through fear, Autun had anticipated the requisitions. Lyons did the same through zeal, but as the price of its proved devotion, begged for the destruction of its rival, Vienne, which city, after buying itself off by a donation of 300 sesterces to each soldier, was still further obliged to furnish provisions, surrender its arms, and give a large sum secretly to Valens.

Aquitania, Narbonensis, and Spain, had naturally pronounced against the murderer of the emperor of their own election; this first army therefore reached the Alps peaceably. The other advanced through the country of the Helvetians, who, ignorant of the death of Galba, refused to recognize Vitellius. They chose a general and

[1] Tac., *Hist.*, ii. 20.
[2] *Ibid.*, i. 63 and 66.

gathered troops, but their recruits could not stand against the trained legionaries. Cæcina surprised them in the rear with the Rhætian militia, at the same time attacking them himself in front. Defeated everywhere, surrounded in their woods and mountains by the Rhætians, Thracians, and Germans, they surrendered at discretion, in order to save their capital Aventicum.

This submission opened to Cæcina the passes of the Alps. But the mountains, already inaccessible by winter, might perhaps be more so owing to the partisans of Otho. By the desertion of a corps of cavalry entrenched upon the banks of the Po, and ordered to watch over the fords, the entrance into Italy was betrayed. Cæcina, certain henceforward that no enemy would detain him, hastened his march. Otho, while saying that Nero had been lost through his delay, allowed himself to be forestalled; he accepted war, instead of himself carrying it into the midst of his adversaries. He could not without the greatest effort have awakened any warlike energy in Rome. Italy had seen no battles since the end of the triumvirate. The senate, the nobles, and the knights, shrank from the idea of leaving sumptuous villas and idle lives to enter again upon the life of the camp. Seated for more than half a century at the feast of Damocles, they were accustomed to see the sword suspended over their heads and looked at it without fear, on condition that the feast was well served and nothing came from without to disturb their slothful lives. But to be obliged to fly to arms, to be exposed to fatigue, to wounds, and like free men, die for Rome, as in the days of the Republic—that was indeed too much to expect! Omens were made to speak; but Otho would not listen. He set forth after commending the Republic to the senate, and speaking at length from the Forum of the majesty of the Roman people, in whose name he went out to battle (March 24th, 69 A.D.). He took with him the prætorians, the city cohorts, detachments of the legions at the moment stationed in the city, volunteers, and 2,000 gladiators, whom he armed as soldiers. He marched without pomp, always on foot, at the head of the standards, wearing an iron cuirass, but led by his soldiers rather than guiding them himself. Their army was under no discipline, though devoted to the chief whom they had chosen and who had showed himself worthy of their affection. But after such disorder

and so many catastrophes, the soldiers doubted their officers, and called that treason which was prudence. "Obedience and discipline," says Tacitus, "were the only virtues lacking to this party, which was not wanting in courage."

While Otho was directing towards the Po the main body of the forces he had been able to gather at Rome, and seven legions, those of Dalmatia, Pannonia, and Mœsia, were preparing to join him, his fleet proceeded to the coast of Narbonne, in the hope of there arresting Valens. It engaged him in a successful combat, which was, however, rendered useless by the absence of any skilful or respected commander (the supporters of Otho had put their own general in irons); and Valens, weakened only by a few cohorts, which held the fleet in check, crossed the Alps. Cæcina had need of this relief. A too precipitate attack upon Placentia had failed, and Suetonius Paulinus, the greatest general of the time since the death of Corbulo, crossing the Po at the heels of Vitellius, had come to give them battle with partial success at Campus Castorum, twelve miles from Cremona. But the soldiers accused Suetonius of not wishing to complete his victory, and loudly demanded to be again led to battle. In vain the old general pointed out that since the union of Valens and Cæcina, the Vitellians having no further relief to expect, everything was to be gained by protracting the campaign; that thus they might be starved out, and time given for the troops from Mœsia, above all for the redoubtable fourteenth legion—which by itself had held in check the rebellious Britons and of old conquered 80,000 islanders—to join them; Otho, anxious to see the end, gave the order for battle. To this first fault he added that of taking away the command from Suetonius, and of himself yielding to the foolish urgency of his friends, who kept him at a distance from the field of battle. The followers of Otho, surprised while marching on a narrow causeway, were cut to pieces (April 14th),[1] and those who escaped the carnage regained in disorder their camp of Bedriacum, whose gates they opened on the morrow to the followers of Vitellius. Otho was at Brixellum,[2]

[1] Dion (lxiv. 10) puts the number of men killed on both sides as high as 40,000. [Cf. the picturesque acount of the battle in Tacitus, *Hist.* ii. 40 *sq.*—*Ed.*]

[2] Bressello, on the right bank of the Po, eleven leagues from Cremona. The position of Bedriacum is uncertain, perhaps near Ustiano, upon the left bank of the Oglio.

whither a soldier hastened to inform him of the defeat. Those around the prince refused to believe in it. "This messenger," they said, "is but a coward who has fled from the field of battle." The soldier made no reply, but pointing his sword towards his breast, fell bleeding at the feet of Otho. This death touched him deeply. "No," he cried, "I will no longer expose the lives of such defenders!" In vain his friends pointed out to him what forces he still had left—the half of the army which had not been in action, the defeated soldiers of Bedriacum, anxious to revenge themselves, the legions of Mœsia, which were already in Aquileia—in vain the soldiers swore to redeem his fortune, those at a distance holding out their hands to him, those near by embracing his knees. He rejected all these projects of civil war. "One battle is enough," he said, and calmly, without ostentation, made his last preparations. He spoke with kindness to each one, according to his age and rank, ordering the young, beseeching the old, to depart and take themselves out of the way of the victor's resentment, and with calm brow and firm voice he reproached them for their useless tears and grief. He saw that those who left him had either boats or carriages, burned all his letters, and distributed what money he had among his servants. Preparing thus for the last sacrifice, he heard a tumult, and perceived that those who, at his order, were leaving camp, were being arrested as deserters, saying, "I must live yet one more night." He forbade violence to be used towards any one, and opened his tent to all who wished to speak with him. Left alone at last, he asked for some ice water and two poniards, whose points he tried; then, having assured himself of the departure of his friends, he lay down quietly and slept. At break of day he woke, and with one blow pierced his heart under the left breast. At the sound of his first groans his people came running, but he died immediately. He was only thirty-eight years old. His funeral took place immediately, as he had ordered. His body was borne by the prætorians, who covered his hands and wound with their tears and kisses; several threw themselves upon the funeral pile. At Bedriacum, at Placentia, and in the other camps, there were many similar deaths.[1] This noble end of a

[1] Tac., *Hist.*, ii. 46-51, and Suet., *Otho*, 10 and 11. The father of Suetonius, Suetonius

prince, unwilling to prolong civil war, and the affection of the soldiers for their chief, relieves a little the darkness of the age. Like a reflection of antique virtue, it shines amidst the orgies and cowardly acts of Vitellius and Nero, keeping alive men's faith in devotion and courage, as Thrasea and Helvidius preserved the tradition of virtue (April 16th, 69 A.D.).

III.—Vitellius.

The Empire was offered by the soldiers to Verginius, who was in the camp at Brixellum; he again refused it, and escaped just as they were breaking into his house. The submission of the soldiers, proud though vanquished, who yielded only because without a leader, was at last carried to Cæcina by Rubrius Gallus. Upper Italy now saw renewed the horrors of former civil wars. The soldiery pillaged, and the German, Batavian, and Gallic auxiliaries satisfied at once their greed and their ancient spite. The leaders, subject to their own troops, dared not interfere; vanquished and vanquishers, both were feared. Quarrels ending in sedition were continually breaking out. Turin was burned and the eight Batavian cohorts stationed there almost came to blows with their legion and the prætorians. In Pavia two Gallic cohorts were cut in pieces by their own legionaries, and scarcely was the tumult quieted when the fourteenth legion was believed to be returning in order to attempt a surprise on the camp of the Vitellians. This corps, which long hesitated between obedience and revolt, was hastily ordered away. The prætorians were disbanded, the seventh legion (*Gemina*), raised by Galba in Spain, was sent to Pannonia, and the First Adjutrix to Spain; the rest of the followers of Otho, sore with defeat, the punishment of their bravest centurions, and the insulting triumph of their rivals, were sent into winter quarters: these were auxiliaries all ready for a new candidate.

The horrible confusion under which Italy suffered spread to those provinces which had recognized Vitellius. In Africa, the procurator of the two Mauretanias had assumed, it was said, the insignia of royalty and the name of Juba, which recalled to the

Lenis (?) was then with Otho as tribune of the thirteenth legion. Plutarch saw the prince's tomb; it was simple, and for its inscription bore merely his name.

Moors their independence. He perished in the attempt, but Cluvius Rufus, who governed all Spain, was accused of wishing to take this government for his share in the division of the Empire. In Britain the soldiers had driven away their leader, and Gaul had just been shaken by an unexpected outbreak of the religious and patriotic sentiment which always existed in the hearts of the rural population. A Boïan peasant passed himself off as a god, and called himself the liberator of Gaul. He was followed by a crowd of fanatics, had already gathered 8,000 men, and the movement was rapidly gaining on the Æduan territory, when the nobles of this city, who were eligible for the senate and honours of Rome, became frightened, and aided by some corps belonging to Vitellius dispersed the mob and took captive its leader. He was thrown to the wild animals, who having already been fed, refused to devour him. "He is invulnerable," cried the people; and it became necessary to have him killed by the soldiers. Nearer still to Rome, in Istria, a fugitive slave passed himself off as a Roman noble whom the cruelty of Nero had forced to seek refuge in this out-of-the-way country; the populace and soldiers were collecting round him when the imposture was discovered. Finally, the entire East was disturbed by the great insurrection of the Jews, to which the proximity of Parthia, and the strange rumours spread through these provinces, might suddenly give formidable proportions.

As is already known, Vitellius was not a man capable of putting a stop to this premature dissolution. He had but just passed the frontiers of Belgica when he learned the victory of Bedriacum. From that moment he would pass through the cities in nothing less than a triumphal car, and descended the Saône in a barge loaded with every preparation for sumptuous feasts. No discipline existed among the servants, none among the soldiers. He himself laughed at their violence and pillage. Having reached the plain of Bedriacum forty days after the battle (May 25th), and seeing a few recoil with horror from the putrefying corpses, he gave utterance to this thought, which has been repeated elsewhere in still more unhappy times: "The smell of an enemy's corpse is always sweet." Slowly he marched towards Rome, laying waste city and country as he passed, for it was less an army than an immense mob which followed him: 60,000 soldiers, of whom

thirty-four cohorts were auxiliary troops, a still greater number of retainers, with buffoons, actors of every description, and charioteers, in whose midst he passed the only moments not devoted to the table or his heavy sleep. "Throughout the camp, as well as in the prætorium, nothing was seen or heard," says Tacitus, "but bacchanalian orgies intermingled with uproar and murder." Seven miles out of Rome the soldiers fell upon the people who came flocking to meet them; even in the city, where their costume, their long pikes, and the skins which they wore, excited curiosity and alarm, for a word, for a look, they slaughtered.

What mattered these disorders to Vitellius? The armies of the East had sworn allegiance, therefore away with care! He set up again the statues of Nero, and spent his time at the circus or at table. For him to reign meant to feast continually. Those Roman tyrants, alike in their proclivity for murder, yet had each some distinguishing vice; that of Vitellius was ignoble—an insatiable gluttony. His biographer tells us, "that he invited himself to feast with several persons at different hours of the same day, and that no banquet cost less than 400,000 sesterces. In order to keep up an appetite for these repasts he was in the habit of taking emetics. At a supper given him by his brother, on the day of his arrival in Rome, there were served 2,000 rare fishes and 7,000 birds. But Vitellius threw into the shade all this profusion by the inauguration of an immense dish, which he christened the shield of Minerva Tutela.[1] In it were livers of plaice, brains of pheasants and peacocks, flamingoes' tongues, roe of lamprey, and a thousand other things, which the three-banked galleys had sought from the remotest border of the Euxine to the Pillars of Hercules. He could not control his gluttony even during the sacrifices: he ate the flesh upon the altar and the cakes which the priests were cooking." In a few months, says Tacitus, he devoured 900,000,000 sesterces.[2] He gave his name to certain dishes which in the time of Dion were still called by his name.

As for the administration, that was the business of Cæcina

[1] This dish was of silver, and was preserved until the time of Hadrian, who had it melted. (Dion, lxv. 3.)

[2] Suet., *Vitell.*, 13; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, xxxv. 12; Dion, lxv. 2-4; Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, iv. 42; Tac., *Hist.*, 95. Cf. Eutropius, vii. 12.

and Valens, long rivals, now enemies, and one of them already a traitor. Vitellius had given them the consulate for the months of

Vitellius (Museum of the Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 20).

September and October, 69 A.D.: a year rich in consuls, counting as many as fifteen.[1] When this nomination was made and his two generals put in charge of the government, he thought he had

[1] There were four consuls-elect who had not time to enter into office. See Borghesi, *Fasti consulares*, p. 68.

fulfilled his imperial duty, and that it only remained to him to live well and merrily. This coarse man had the easy temperament of all good livers. On his way from Cologne to Bedriacum he had rescued from the rage of the soldiers more unfortunates than he had left in their hands; after his victory he had spared Otho's brother, pardoned Suetonius Paulinus, who had defeated him in the battle of Campus Castorum; and towards the end, at the most critical moment, having in his power a brother, son, and nephew of Vespasian, he had not taken their lives.

As he had been in the camp so he was in Rome, a base seeker after popularity: at the theatre he applauded with the populace, at the circus he supported their favourite charioteers. In the senate, whither he went without any necessity, his manner and language were not those of a prince: he made long speeches and took part in lively discussions, compromising to the imperial dignity. Once when Helvidius Priscus seemed to him to presume too far, he called the tribunes to the aid of his despised authority. At the end of the debate an effort was made to soften his anger: "Is it, then," he said to them, "so new a thing to see two senators differ in opinion?" That seemed quite dignified, but when he added: "Have I not myself often contradicted Thrasea?" the suggestion seemed impertinent. Dion praises him for not having confiscated any person's property, nor broken any of the wills of Otho's friends.

These easy manners did not, however, prevent his assuming at times imperial habits. Cornelius Dolabella, a prominent man whom he suspected, had his throat cut while sleeping; later he seems to have forced another, Junius Blæsus, to take poison.[1] Suetonius asserts that to settle his accounts with his creditors he condemned them to death.[2] One of them thought to escape by crying out, "I have made you my heir;" a doubly dangerous remark, which would have caused him to be condemned had he not been so already. Vitellius, on opening the will and finding that a freedman was to share with him, executed both testator and co-legatee.

[1] Tacitus's account is not clear; it is not easy to understand how such a thing could be done. He says even that the joy of Vitellius upon seeing Blæsus dead confirmed belief in the crime: *addidit facinori fidem* (*Hist.* iii. 39).

[2] Dion only says, what is more probable (lxv. 5), that he was satisfied with the surrender of their credentials.

At the same time were executed two sons for asking for their father's pardon.

In those days seers were men of importance: in misfortune they were consulted, and not unnaturally when good fortune came they were proscribed. Vitellius ordered those of Italy to leave the peninsula before the 1st October; they fled or hid, but still in their own way launched an edict: "Greeting to all. By order of the Chaldeans, Vitellius is forbidden to exist in any quarter of the globe by the Calends of October." All who could be seized were executed. A severe reply to their joke, but the executioner had often a part in the imperial facetiæ, and there were always people found to laugh.

This then is what the Empire had come to in the course of half a century after the death of its founder. In Rome rough and savage manners; in the army no discipline; in the provinces doubtful allegiance; lax government everywhere; cities resuming their strife as rivals under the cover of revolution;[1] the peace bestowed by Augustus was disappearing; the frontiers, which he had garrisoned with troops, left without defence; in short, the edifice which he had raised was tottering to a fall which threatened to overwhelm the world in one vast ruin.

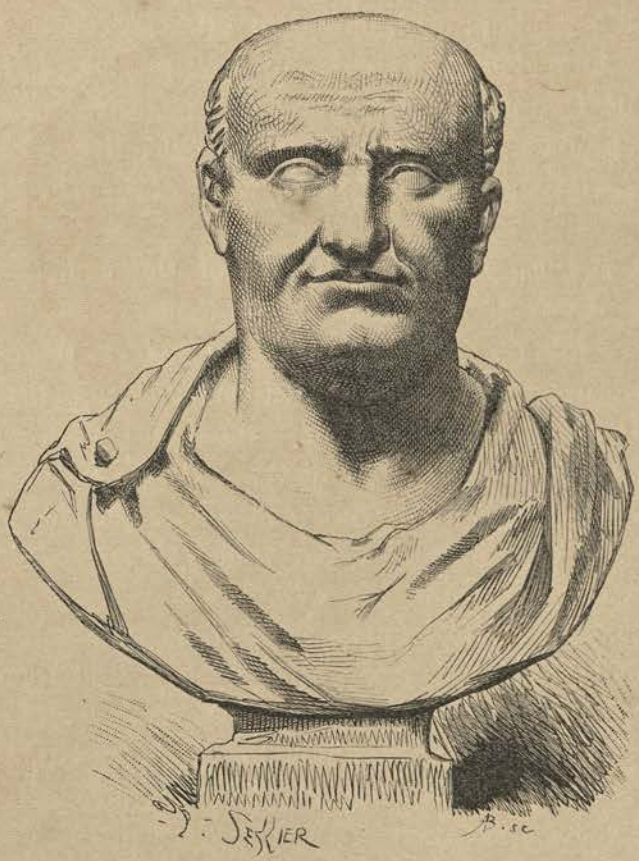
For this once the excess of ill brought for a time a salutary reaction. The Augustan age recommences with Vespasian, and was continued by Titus, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines, with no certainty, it is true, for the future, since everything was still left to chance and force, but making of their reigns the most prosperous epoch in the history of the human race.

The list of emperors shows how rapid had been the decline and destruction of the Roman aristocracy under the double action of its vices and a monarchical government. The nobles no longer fill the high offices, formerly their province, and the leaders of the army are new men and furnish masters for the Empire. After the Cæsars yet one more patrician, Galba, held the power; Otho belonged only to a royal house of Etruria; and already we have

[1] *Discordibus municipiorum animis magis inter semet quam contumacia adversus principem* (Tac., *Hist.*, iv. 3). As had happened in Lyons and Vienne in Gaul, Leptis and Œa, in Africa, entered into bloody combat. (*Ibid.*, 50.) Cf. Suet., *Vesp.*, 8: *Provinciæ civitatesque liberæ, nec non et regna quædam tumultuosius inter se agebant.*

Vitellius, who is only of knightly origin; Vespasian,[1] the son of a Sabine peasant, the first of the provincial emperors.

Vespasian's grandfather had been centurion in Pompey's legions at Pharsalia, and his father did not attain much higher rank in the army, but when charged with collecting the tax of the fortieth in Asia, he showed such honesty that several cities raised statues to him, bearing this inscription: "To the honest collector of taxes." This nobility was as good as any, and Vespasian never blushed for his ancestry, but laughed at those who would trace it to one of Hercules' companions; as emperor it pleased him to visit the places where his childhood had been passed; he forbade anything to be changed in the humble house where he had lived, and even on solemn festivals he always drank from a little silver cup given him by his grandfather. We should willingly ignore his cowardly complaisances towards Caligula, but under an easily offended despotism sycophancy is the price paid for safety by honest but timid persons. His services under Claudius caused them to be forgotten. Legate of a legion during the expedition to Britain, he fought against the enemy thirty times,

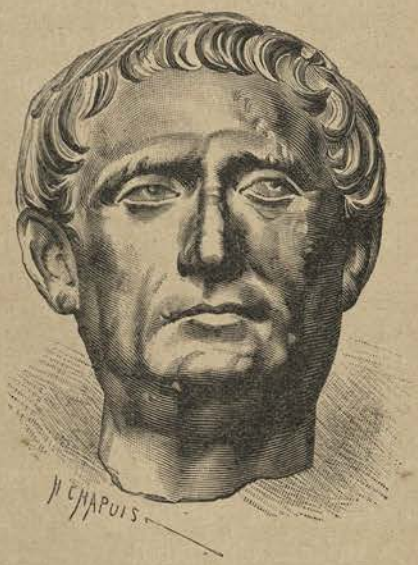


Vespasian.[2]

[1] Titus Flavius Vespasianus, born at Falacrinum, near Reate (Rieti), on the 17th of November, 9 A.D. (Suet., *Vesp.*, 2.)

[2] Marble found near S. John Lateran.

subjugated two powerful tribes, twenty cities, and the Isle of Wight. In addition he received the *ornamenta triumphalia*, two priesthoods, and the consulate for the two last months of the year 51. Sent by lot to Africa as proconsul, he proved himself both honest and severe,[1] and returned from his province poorer than he had started, so poor indeed, that consul though he was and recipient of triumphal honours, he was obliged, in order to live, to engage in horse dealing. He however accompanied Nero on his journey to Achaia, and while there risked his life by going to sleep while the emperor was singing. His disgrace was brought to an end by the necessity felt at the time for a clever general of low birth. The Jews had just defeated the consular lieutenant of Syria and captured an eagle. Corbulo being dead, and Suetonius Paulinus forgotten in his government of Mœsia, Nero bethought himself of Vespasian, and gave to him the command of the three legions sent against the Jews (latter part of 66 A.D.).



Trajan's father (M. Ulpius Trajanus).[2]

His first care was to re-establish discipline. He used the best means to accomplish this by himself setting the example of shirking neither fatigue nor danger. Everywhere his soldiers saw him fighting at their head; while besieging one little city several arrows entered his shield and he was wounded in the knee. His great ability, together with the devoted assistance of his son Titus

[1] Suet., *Vesp.*, i. 4. Tacitus (*Hist.*, ii. 97) seems to assert the opposite. Vespasian had without doubt already shown rigid economy in this administration. Hence that riot of Hadrumetum, when turnips were thrown at his head, and those unfavourable recollections (*famosum invisumque*) left among the inhabitants, while Vitellius had made himself beloved by his laxity and prodigality. One thing is certain, that Vespasian was poor when he left the province. Still Suetonius accuses him of having extorted 200,000 sesterces from a young man who wished to obtain the laticlave. Burrus was also known to sell his influence, and, unfortunately, these habits, which have been practised in other ages, have not always caused men to lose their character.

[2] Bronze bust found in Servia and now in the Museum of Belgrade.

and Trajan's father, did the rest; the conquered Jews were once more shut up in Jerusalem, and the entire East, taught by the Greeks to hate the race of Abraham, rang with the name of Vespasian. After Nero's death he successively recognized Galba, Otho, and Vitellius. But when he read the third oath of allegiance, his soldiers showed by their silence that they no longer intended submissively to accept chiefs given them by the other armies. They repeated the murmurs of several of the Mœsian cohorts: "Had they less weight than the Spanish legions, who had elected Galba, than the prætorians who had chosen Otho, or than the German army which had proclaimed Vitellius? Throughout the Empire they alone at this moment combated the enemies of Rome, and to reward their pains they were to be taken from a province which they loved and exiled to the banks of the Rhine, where a severe climate and hard service awaited them; and this, undoubtedly, with the intention of separating them from their leader, that thus he might be prevented from accomplishing the vengeance bequeathed him by the dying Otho in the name of the Republic."[1] A copy of a letter, written, it was said, by that emperor, and summoning Vespasian to the relief of the Empire, was in fact circulated.

The interests of the chiefs of the Eastern provinces were identical with those of their soldiers. Mucianus, who commanded four legions in Syria, might have disputed the purple with his colleague; but as rivals neither would have succeeded, and this he had the wisdom to see. Besides, the soldiers favoured Vespasian, one of whose sons already showed ability. Mucianus, without family, had only himself to think of, and believed it safer to make an emperor and impose upon him conditions than to become one himself.

He became reconciled to the commander of the Judæan legions, whose enemy he had hitherto been, and offered to recognize him as chief. The prefect of Egypt, associated in their plans, promised two legions; Vespasian's image had been already placed upon their

[1] Tacitus (*Hist.*, ii. 80) and Suetonius (*Vesp.*, 4-6) say that this project, attributed to Vitellius, of transporting the German legions to the East, displeased the natives as well as the soldiers. There was besides a long-standing jealousy between the Syrian legions and those of the West. Under Tiberius, they alone of all the Roman army had not placed Sejanus in the centre of their flags, they alone also at his death received a gratuity. (Suet., *Tib.*, 48.)

flags by some of the Mœsian soldiery, and the legions of Illyricum, vanquished without having fought at Bedriacum, might be counted on to support the avenger of Otho. They possessed fleets, numerous auxiliaries, the friendship of Vologeses, and oracles announced that about this time a master of the world would come out of Judæa. A Jewish prisoner had named this ruler of the world; during the life of Nero, Josephus was being sent, loaded with chains, to Rome, when he said to Vespasian: "Keep me, I am a prophet; you will be emperor!"[1]

Youthful Titus (from a Bust at Naples).

On the 1st of July, 69 A.D., he was proclaimed in Alexandria by the prefect of Egypt; two days later the army of Judæa saluted him emperor, and at the same time Mucianus administered the oath to his legions. To the honour of the troops and their new prince be it said, there was no question of a large gratuity. Money was needed for the preparations, and they were obliged to lay a requisition on the people of the country. Mucianus gave all he had; others imitated him, especially the allied kings of Edessa, Commagene, and Iturea.[2] Each and all expected to make good their investments in the event of victory. But, adds Tacitus, all had not, like Mucianus, the right and the power to indemnify themselves.

It was decided that Armenia and Parthia should give hostages, in order to guarantee the peace of the frontier; that Titus, the elder son of the emperor, should take upon himself the reduction

[1] Suet., *Vesp.*, 5, and Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, iii. 8, 9. Tac., *Hist.*, ii. 74-78, v. 13: *Profecti Judæa rerum potirentur.*

[2] Tac., *Hist.*, ii. 81; Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, vii. 28.

of Jerusalem; Vespasian, by occupying Alexandria and Carthage, was to close Africa and thus starve Rome; Mucianus to march on Italy and stir up the legions of the Danube; while urgent messages were to be sent to agitate Gaul, shake the wavering fidelity of the armies of Britain and Spain, and to hold out to the prætorians the hope of their re-establishment. The seven legions of Illyricum, already decided, did not even wait for Mucianus, but took the initiative under the influence of a legionary legate, Antonius Primus, a man of tarnished reputation and a bad citizen, but a soldier of courage and resolution, who knew how to command and enforce obedience.[1] The chiefs of the Sarmatian Jazyges, who undertook to guard the Danube, were taken in pay, and two kings of the Suevi, Sidonius and Italicus, who followed Primus, when, in spite of Vespasian's orders, he crossed the Julian Alps with the cavalry and vexillarii.

A Vexillary (from the Column of Antonine).[2]

The Vitellians also took the field, but no one would have recognized in these languid, enervated soldiers, marching in disorder and almost without arms along the Flaminian Way, the proud German legions who were renowned throughout the Empire. The bravest of them had remained in Rome, as the twenty new cohorts of the prætorium and of the city.[3] Their chief, Cæcina, jealous of the credit of Valens, had already lent a favourable ear to the propositions of Sabinus, Vespasian's brother, who was prefect of Rome. Cæcina chose to

[1] Tac., *Hist.*, ii. 36. He was a Gaul from Toulouse, surnamed Becco. Driven from the senate in 61 A.D. for a forgery, he had been restored by Galba, who gave him command of the seventh legion (*Gemina*). (Suet., *Vitell.*, 13; Tac., *Ann.*, xiv. 40; *Hist.*, ii. 86.)

[2] The vexillary was the standard-bearer, and in addition, the veteran, who having finished the legal term of service, was retained *sub vexillo*. The corps serving separately from the legion were also called *vexilla: Germanica vexilla* (Tac., *Hist.*, i. 31, 70); *equitum vexilla* (*Hist.*, ii. 11); etc.

[3] Sixteen prætorian, four city, each of 1,000 men. (Tac., *Hist.*, ii. 93.)

be deliberate about his treason. In order to give his agents time to conclude the bargain, he, with a military foresight which proved his ability, chose the line of the Adige as the proper place to hold in check an enemy, already master of Aquileia, Vicentia, Padua, and the stronghold of Verona. By these well-calculated delays, he gave to the Flavians time to gather more than 40,000 men, and to his accomplice, Lucilius Bassus, to decide the defection of the fleet at Ravenna. When this news reached him he pulled down the statues of Vitellius which were in his camp, and inscribed the name of Vespasian on his flags. But the soldiers became indignant at this treason towards the choice of the German legions; falling upon Cæcina, they put him in chains, and then without a leader and in disorder, abandoned their lines and rejoined the troops which they had left at Cremona. Taking advantage of the sedition Antonius Primus crossed the Adige, no longer defended, and in two days reached Bedriacum, whence he might be able to cut off the relief which Valens would not fail to bring them. However, resolved as soon as possible to strike some decisive blow, before the Transalpine provinces became disturbed, or the Germans who threatened an invasion through Rhætia should appear, he, after the first day, sent out a strong reconnoitring party towards Cremona, which, eight miles from Bedriacum, encountered two hostile legions, and drove them in disorder back upon the city. At that very moment six other legions entered it, after a march of thirty miles in one day. Instead of resting after so long a march, they crossed the city and the entrenched camp which protected it, and advanced to the attack, leaving to Antonius scarcely time to remind the Mœsian legions that this was less a quarrel of two emperors than of the two armies of the Danube and the Rhine.

They fought all through the night. The moon having risen behind the Flavians, threw heavy shadows of the soldiers and their horses in advance of their line, thus misleading the blows of the Vitellians; while the latter, seen in broad light, were harassed by arrows not one of which missed its aim. In the morning, while the third legion from Syria was worshipping the rising sun, came news of the arrival of Mucianus; the air resounded with wild shouts, and the army, making a supreme effort, stormed the camp. The Vitellians, in despair of longer resisting, had recourse to

Cæcina, whom they freed from his chains and implored to intercede for them, and they hung out upon the city walls, as a token of their submission, the veils and fillets worn by suppliants in the temples. This was the first victory, since the time of Sylla, gained by the troops of the Eastern provinces over those of the West.

In the strife a father had been killed by his son, a brother by his brother: this is a common crime in civil war; but one of these murderers boasted of his deed as of a glorious exploit, and demanded a reward from the generals. "A like piece of ill-fortune," says Tacitus, "had been known at the time of our former dissensions: one of Pompey's soldiers killed a brother in the ranks of Cinna; but having recognized him, refused to survive, and fell upon his sword." Even civil war had degenerated.

On the day of the battle a large fair was held at Cremona; the greed of the soldiers was fed by it, and during four days the city was given over to the brutal passions of 40,000 furious soldiers and as many more camp-followers. The Flavians gave the honours of the pillage to the Vitellians, and sealed their reconciliation over the smoking ruins of the ill-starred city. After being gutted and all its inhabitants killed, it was at last burned, and of this flourishing colony, founded 286 years before, to arrest Hannibal and the Gauls, nothing remained standing but the little temple of Mephitis outside the walls.[1]

The fall of Cremona echoed sadly to the heart of Italy. For more than a century[2] the peninsula had heard no sound of arms, save that at Bedriacum, nor seen a cottage burned by soldiers, and now Pannonians, Dalmatians, Suevi, natives of Mœsia and Syria, renewed the misfortunes known for four generations only through the stories told in the watches of the night. The leaders realized the abominations of the sack of Cremona, but suffered them because they were no longer masters of their soldiers; some, because they lacked authority, like Pompeius Silvanus, "who in talking allowed

[1] Tac., *Hist.*, iii. 1-35; Dion, lxv. 15: Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, iv. 41. "The Vitellians did the most injury, because they knew the houses of the rich men." Spite of Antonius's order to release all the captive Cremonians, the soldiers wished to sell them for slaves, and no purchaser coming forward they began to kill them (*occidi cœpere*, Tac., *Hist.*, iii. 34). Then the relations and the allies bought them in secret.

[2] Since the sack of Perugia, 40 B.C.

the time for action to pass;"[1] others because they tried to succeed by disastrous methods, like Antonius, who gave them the right of replacing their dead officers. "Suffrage gave rank to the most turbulent, and the soldiers no longer depended upon their chiefs, the leaders being elected by the tumultuous caprice of their soldiers, so that discipline became corrupted by these seditious practices."

Fabius Valens, who, on account of the defection of the fleet, had not been able to go by way of Rimini and Ravenna, heard in Etruria of the disaster of Cremona. He formed the plan of embarking for Narbonensis to excite the Gauls to revolt, and also Britain and Germany, and to recommence his first campaign. Narbonensis, however, had already pronounced for Vespasian; Valens, driven by a tempest upon the islands of Hyères, near Marseilles, was captured by the galleys of the procurator, Valerius Paulinus, and after a time put to death. This news and that which arrived from Italy decided the defection of Spain and Gaul. Britain alone hesitated, and the islanders seeing in these conflicts a chance of regaining their own liberty recommenced the war. Upon the Rhine, Civilis aroused the Batavians, not so much against Vitellius as against Rome. Germany was in commotion, and all the barbarians from the Hercynian Forest to the Caucasus, feeling that the Empire had lifted from them its mighty hand and turned it against itself, rose and marched upon the dismantled frontiers. The Dacians had crossed the Danube; the Euxine was covered with pirates; and in Pontus one of the late king's freedmen was calling the neighbouring nations to arms.[2]

Amidst the noise of an Empire falling to pieces upon his head, Vitellius, "hidden in the shady groves of the gardens of Aricia," seemed to hear and see nothing, "like those unclean beasts who, after they have been fed, lie down and sleep."[3] He had regarded the Empire as a banquet, and desired to finish the feast in tranquillity. He roused himself, however, on hearing of the defeat at Cremona, and on the approach of the Flavians he sent out from Rome fourteen prætorian cohorts, all the cavalry, and the legion formed of the marines. These were picked men;

[1] *Socordem bello et dies rerum verbis terentem* (Tac., *Hist.*, iii. 50).

[2] Tac., *Hist.*, iii. 44–47.

[3] *Jacent torpentque* (Tac., *Hist.*, i. 36).

with them he could close the Apennines, which were already covered with snow, and possibly imperil the victorious army which Antonius was urging, in a confused and disorderly crowd, upon the Capital, in order to arrive there before Mucianus. But Vitellius did not know how to employ them to advantage; and, on the rumour that a new war was breaking out behind him, he arrested them in the strong position of Narnia. A centurion, with the aid of forged letters, purporting to be from Vespasian, had just brought about the defection of the fleet of Misenum. Puteoli, which would be ruined if the war should continue, had pronounced for him who was in command of Egypt and Asia; Capua, through rivalry, remained faithful to Vitellius; but a troop which he despatched against the rebels went over to their side and also captured Terracina. The Samnites, and Marsians, and Pelignians, joined the rebels; "and of the Empire of the world there was left to him only the space included between Circeii and Narnia." Even the army in camp at this latter place itself abandoned Vitellius on being shown the head of Fabius Valens, whom the soldiers thought was obtaining succour from Gaul and Germany.

The Flavian chiefs knew the character of their troops, and for Rome taken by assault they dreaded the fate of Cremona, whose destruction had seemed to all Italy a work of barbarians.[1]

[1] Dion says of the Flavians that they showed so much ardour only for the sake of pillaging Italy . . . . *ἵνα τὴν Ἰταλίαν διαρπάσωσιν· ὅ καὶ ἐγένετο* (lxv. 9). They were, in fact, barbarians. We have seen that Antonius took in his pay two Suevian kings, who, with their troops, were placed in the first line in the second battle of Cremona (Tac., *Hist.*, iv. 21). The soldiers of the fleet of Ravenna were for the most part (*magna pars, ibid.*, 12) Dalmatians and Pannonians, who were drafted into the legions. The cavalry played an important part in this war; sustained by the auxiliary cohorts it had been the main cause of the success of the first battle before Cremona, and this cavalry, these cohorts, were chiefly levied in the provinces where the legions were quartered. Tacitus (iii. 19) says of the Mœsian auxiliaries that they were as good as the legionaries; and one legion, the eleventh, had 6,000 Dalmatian auxiliaries. It is clear that the chiefs had good reason to fear for Rome. The Vitellian army was composed in nearly the same way. Civilis reminds the Gauls (Tac., *Hist.*, iv. 17) that, in the battle with Vindex, it was the Batavian cavalry which had crushed the Arverni and Ædui, and that the Belgæ formed part of the legions of Rufus, and he adds: *Vere reputantibus, Galliam suismet viribus concidisse.* There were so many Germans among the Vitellians that at the sack of Rome all the tall young men were killed, for the reason that unusual stature indicated a barbarian (*proceritas corporum*, Tac., *Hist.*, v. 14). In the ranks of the legions there were many provincials from the frontier districts who had entered the legions after serving in the auxiliary cohorts. At Cremona the third legion, which had come from Syria, worshipped the rising sun, as if it had been entirely composed of Syrians. At the siege of Jerusalem acts of distinguished valour were performed by a Syrian, Bithynian, etc. (Josephus, vi. 1, 6, and 8). Finally, the despair of the Syrians on hearing that the legions of the Euphrates were to be sent to the

Antonius and Mucianus sent pressing messages to Vitellius which decided him to treat with Sabinus, Vespasian's brother and prefect of the city. He accepted their conditions: his life and 100,000,000 sesterces, with shelter in Campania. But, though he was a man capable of shamefully abandoning his position and accommodating himself to the terms his rival deigned to offer, the former legionaries of Germany who had chosen him to make their own profit out of his reign, and the Roman mob who gladly recognized their own type in this drunken and gluttonous emperor, did not propose to lose the advantages they had promised themselves. Soldiery and people once again ranged themselves together in favour of the ignoble creature, heartless and brainless, whose vices so well suited their own. When, from the steps of the palace, he announced to the crowd that he "had relinquished the imperial power which had been laid upon him against his will," violent clamours broke out, and he consented to withdraw his abdication.

The night brought back his fears; at daybreak he left the palace, wrapped in a dark-coloured toga, surrounded by his weeping servants; his young son followed him borne in a litter: it was a scene resembling a funeral procession. He had summoned the people into the Forum, and from the Rostra repeated his declaration of the preceding night: For the love of peace, he said, and for the good of the State, he withdrew, asking only that the people would remember him, and that they would have compassion on his brother, his wife, and the innocent age of his children; and upon this he presented to them his son. Lastly, he detached his dagger from his belt, in token that he renounced his right of life and death over the citizens, and attempted to give it to the consul, who was unwilling to accept so dangerous a present. Again the soldiers and the people clamoured against this renunciation; and when Vitellius directed his steps towards his brother's dwelling they objected to his withdrawing into a private house. The palace was his abode, they cried; it was thither that he must go; and they

Rhine, proves that relations of all kinds were established between the provincials and the legionaries who were permanently established in the provinces. Accordingly, the armies being encamped along the frontiers, that is to say, in the least Romanized parts of the Empire, and recruiting chiefly in their immediate neighbourhood, their character would naturally alter by degrees, and we have no occasion to wonder that they ended by having nothing Roman about them.

barred all the other streets, leaving open to him only the Via Sacra, which led to the Palatine. Vitellius returned to the palace.

Meanwhile the rumour of the abdication had spread, and the principal senators, most of the knights, the soldiers of the urban cohorts and of the watch had gathered around Sabinus. An accidental meeting brought about a street encounter between the two parties near the Quirinal. The Vitellians getting the better of their adversaries, Sabinus fled for shelter to the Capitol, whence he sent a messenger to Vitellius reproaching him with the infraction of the agreement. This success had not increased the courage of the sad emperor; he excused himself, throwing the blame upon his troops, and dismissed the messenger by a secret door, "fearing lest the soldiers might kill—in their aversion to peace—the man who had come to mediate between the two parties."

The night was quiet, thanks to rain which was falling heavily. In the morning the Vitellians assailed the Capitol, making their way by means of the houses which, since Rome had become so great a city, had been permitted on the sides of the hill, their roofs being on a level with the foundations of the old fortress. For awhile they were beaten back with stones and tiles thrown down from the tops of the porticoes; but the insurgents threw lighted torches which set the surrounding buildings on fire, and followed close upon the flames. A new kind of barricade arrested them: the statues of gods and heroes which Sabinus had heaped up at the entrance of the fortress. Two flank attacks, one through the grove of the Asylum, the other by way of the hundred steps which adjoined the Tarpeian Rock, gave them opportunity to come out upon the plateau. The struggle was brief; some few more courageous than the rest were killed, but most fled soon enough to find the means of escape open, which by no means hindered them from claiming later the honour of having fought for Vespasian and in defence of the Capitol. Others escaped, mingling with the Vitellians, whose pass-word they had been able to obtain; Domitian, clad in a linen garment, went out with the priests, and took refuge near the Velabrum, with one of his father's clients. Seated at table in the house of Tiberius, Vitellius had watched the conflict from a distance. Sabinus and the consul Quintus Atticus were brought to him; he attempted to save their lives, but in spite

of his entreaties the populace tore in pieces Sabinus; the consul, Vitellius was able to save.

While this was going on the flames were devouring the Capitol and the temple of the Empire was becoming a mass of ruins.

Upon the faith of the treaty which was in process of negotiating, the army of Vespasian had stopped at Otriculum, and there was tranquilly celebrating the Saturnalia. Upon receiving news of what had passed in Rome the troops were at once sent forward towards the city: Antonius, with the infantry, by the Flaminian Way; Petilius Cerialis, with the cavalry, by the Via Salaria. A repulse which the latter experienced in the suburbs intoxicated the populace, who armed themselves with whatever they could find, and rushed with great uproar to the ramparts. Vitellius, not much encouraged, although he had received news that his brother had just succeeded in suppressing the movement in Campania, repaired to the senate-house, where nothing better could be found to do than to send a deputation to the Flavians, "counselling peace and concord." He even sent out the Vestals with a letter in which he requested a day should be fixed "on which to terminate everything." Antonius received the sacred virgins with great respect, and continued to advance as far as the Milvian Bridge, where he proposed to halt his troops, to avoid fighting within the city. The philosopher Musonius also proposed to arrest their advance by calling on them to consider their afflicted country; he, however, was received with howls of derision and narrowly escaped with his life. The prey was too attractive, and the soldiers carried along their chiefs.

Concordia.

There were many sanguinary encounters, in the Gardens of Sallust, in the Campus Martius, especially in the camp of the prætorian guard, which was regularly besieged with "the tortoise," with battering machines, earthworks, and fire. Otho's prætorians were especially vindictive here, making it a point of honour to re-enter victoriously the lucrative place whence they had been driven out by the prætorians of Vitellius. Not one of the latter begged for quarter when the camp was stormed; not one would have obtained it had he asked. This was, like the whole of the war, a rivalry of soldiers rather than of emperors.

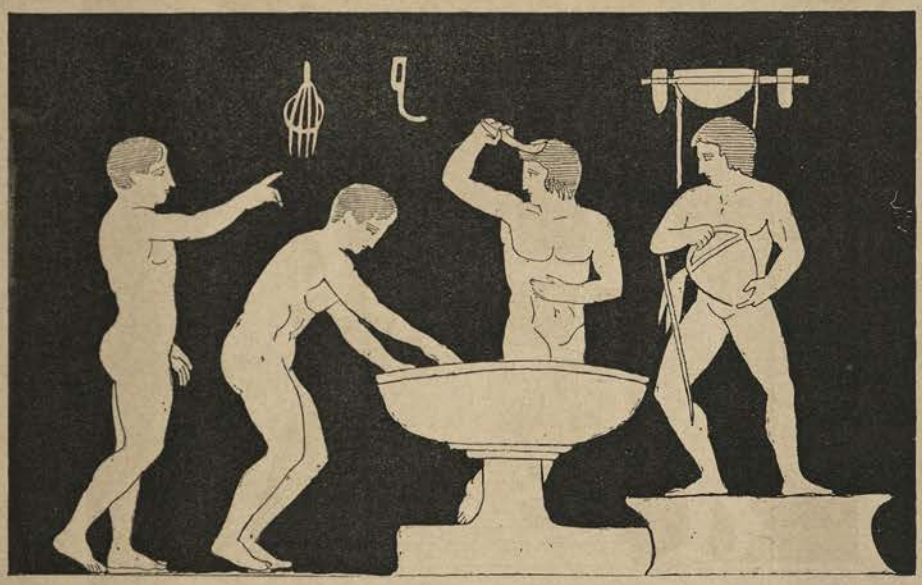
A part of the population aided the Vitellians, while the rest looked on at the battle from the tops of the houses, as at a gladiatorial show, applauding the strong and skilful, howling their contempt at the unlucky or cowardly, on whichever side they were; and if a group of disbanded soldiery took refuge in the shops they pointed out the refugees to their pursuers. The populace and the slaves followed the carnage, picking up the spoils which the soldier, busy with his destructive work, was neglecting, and

Scene of Baths (Women). From a Vase in the Hamilton Collection (Tischbein, vol. i. pl. 59.)

plundering the dead. But from the great extent of the city it was impossible that fighting should go on everywhere. In quarters not yet invaded men went on with their usual routine of business or amusement. The baths, and taverns, and places of ill-repute were open and filled. The public calamity was like a new zest to pleasure, and the idea of patriotism was so completely extinct that no one suffered in the affliction of the country. Disastrous news arriving a few days later from the provinces produced no more effect:[1] a fresh proof that Rome was no longer Rome, and that the people who inhabited it had utterly ceased to be Roman.

[1] Tac., *Hist.*, iv. 12; . . . *nequaquam mœsta civitas* . . . . *cæsos exercitus, capta legionum hiberna, descivisse Gallias, non ut mala, loquebantur.*

Nevertheless these dwellers in Rome, incapable of foresight or action, whose hearts no longer responded to the public woe, quickly learned to their cost—without for that becoming any the more resolute citizens—that cowardice or carelessness which stands aloof from danger is by no means the best way of escaping from peril. The half-barbarous soldiery scouring the city as conquerors began by killing at random all whom they met. When the streets had been blocked with heaps of the slain, and the public squares and pavement of the temples were red with blood, they

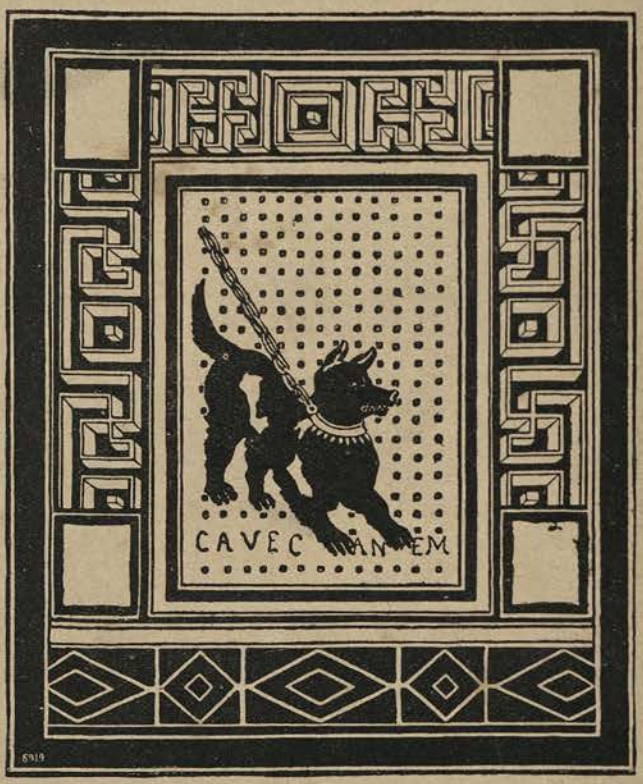


Scene of Baths (Men). (Tischbein, vol. i. p. 58.)

searched the houses for legionaries from the army of the Rhine; it was enough to be tall and young for a man to be considered a soldier of the German legions and murdered accordingly. After blood, gold: the rich were denounced; slaves betrayed their masters; the latter were slain as Vitellians and their property seized. Dion and Josephus speak of more than 50,000 murdered at this time.

It was a long time before Vitellius was seized. "When he learned that the Flavians had entered the city, he escaped by the rear of the palace, with his cook and his baker, and had himself carried in a litter to the Aventine, where his wife lived, hoping thence to escape into Campania. There again harassed by

uncertainty, he returned to the palace, the silence and desolation of which filled him with terror. After wandering through the building in much distress, he took refuge in the porter's room, fastened the dog outside, and barricaded the door with a mattress and bedstead. Presently came the Flavians and dragged him from his retreat; he begged for his life, even though it were to be spent in prison, and declared that he had important secrets to reveal to



Pompeian Mosaic, called the *Cave canem*.

Vespasian. But they dragged him down the Via Sacra towards the Forum, half-naked, his hands tied behind his back, a rope around his neck, his garments torn, amidst insults and outrages; some pulled his head back by the hair, others raised his chin with the point of a sword to make him show his face and look up at his overthrown statues and at the spot where Galba had perished. Some threw mud at him; others called him drunkard and incendiary, and reproached him with his red face and sottish figure. Thus he was dragged to the Gemoniæ, where he was

hacked in pieces, and his remains thrown into the Tiber"[1] (21st December, 69 A.D.). He was the last of the patrician emperors.

Vitellius does not merit the twenty-five pages we have bestowed upon him; but Caligula, Claudius, and Nero, have shown us what they did with the palace and government of Augustus, we must needs also see what Vitellius did with Rome and the legions of Cæsar.

[1] Suet., *Vitell.*, 17; Tac., *Hist.*, iii. 68–85; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, xxxiv. 7; Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, iv. 42.

Coin of Vitellius (large Bronze).

CHAPTER LXXVII.

VESPASIAN (69-79 A.D.).

I.—War with the Batavi (69–70).

VESPASIAN saw the conclusion of two wars, one commenced under Nero, the other under Vitellius, neither of which concerns the history of his reign, except that his generals finished them.

The originator of one of these wars, Civilis, was of royal race in his own nation—an ambitious title which was applied among the Germans to petty chiefs who, born of honoured families, were by this circumstance raised above the mass of freemen. Civilis had good causes of resentment against the Empire. Nero had put his brother to death and he himself had narrowly escaped. Galba having pardoned him, the soldiers of the army of the Lower Rhine accused him of being an accomplice in the murder of Fonteius Capito and demanded his death. Vitellius saved him a second time, but he swore not to cut his hair until he had had his revenge. When Antonius Primus had proclaimed Vespasian in Pannonia, he wrote to Civilis to make a feint of insurrection for the purpose of hindering the legions of the Rhine from hastening to the assistance of Vitellius. The Batavian willingly accepted the commission; he had lost an eye, and he prided himself upon this misfortune, which assimilated him to Hannibal and to Sertorius; he, like them, cherished the hope of crushing Rome by his subjects' arms. Upon receipt of the letters of Antonius he secretly called together the chief men of his nation,[1] explained to them that Gaul was in disorder, the Germans friendly to all the

[1] The Batavi, a section of the Catti, who had established themselves in the neighbourhood of the ocean, occupied a part of what is now southern Holland, Utrecht, Gueldres, and northern Brabant.

enemies of Rome, the Roman camps deserted,[1] Italy in a blaze, and the moment arrived to throw off a hated yoke. The Canninefates and Frisians, neighbours of the Batavi, joined in the plot;

Vespasian (Bust in the Uffizi Gallery at Florence).

and emissaries were sent to stimulate the defection of the British auxiliaries and of those Batavi who had served with the legions, especially the eight cohorts who had rendered themselves famous by their courage at Bedriacum.

[1] The fifth and fifteenth legions together did not contain 5,000 men.

In a few days the Romans had been driven from all the positions that they occupied in the island formed by the Rhine, the Vahalis, and the Mosa. As the result of a battle, Civilis obtained their weapons, and the German oarsmen of the fleet carried over to him the vessels belonging to the legions, twenty-four in number, which made him master of the Lower Rhine. After this brilliant success he sought to persuade Germany and Gaul to take up arms. The latter, however, sent him but a few volunteers, far more coming from the right shore of the Rhine. Two legions seeking to return into the island were unsuccessful on account of the defection of the Batavian cavalry and the feeble resistance made by the Ubian and Trevirian auxiliaries. What remained of the legions hastened to take shelter at Vetera Castra.[1]

The eight Batavian cohorts on their return from Italy had already arrived at Mayence when the messenger from Civilis reached them, at the moment when, by the order of Vitellius, they were about to turn back to recross the Alps. They responded without hesitation to the appeal of their compatriots, and on the road they destroyed a third Roman corps which barred their passage. Civilis had now an army inured to fighting, and he led them at once to attack the fortifications of Vetera Castra. The army of the Upper Rhine hastened to the spot, but insubordination prevailed in these legions, the officers being of the party of Vespasian and the soldiers favourable to Vitellius. The latter suspecting treason everywhere, and not without cause, compelled their commanding officer, Hordeonius, to relinquish his position. They then separated into three divisions, part of them encamping at Gelduba, where they narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the enemy; another portion at Novesium; and the rest at Mayence. Meanwhile the siege of Vetera Castra continued. News from Italy at this time augmented the insubordination and ill-feeling among the legions. In a seditious tumult the soldiers murdered Hordeonius, and Dilius Vocula, who had been placed in command, was obliged to flee in the disguise of a slave. The Roman troops united and then separated again. They had sworn allegiance to Vespasian; two legions now set up again the images

[1] Furstenberg, near Xanten, in the Duchy of Cleves, or Xanten itself; according to Cluvier and Greenwood, *Hist. of the Germans*, i. 150.

of Vitellius, although they knew that he was dead, and in a few days threw them down again. These uncertainties and disorders favoured the Batavi, who now captured Gelduba, and Civilis exercised his young son in shooting at the Roman prisoners tied to trees to serve as a mark. Other legionaries were sent as a present to the German chiefs, and ere long large bodies of German troops crossed the Rhine, which chanced to be so low that navigation was stopped, and fords were formed in many places, as if the rivers themselves, those old barriers of the Empire, gave way before the barbarians. Already the remote districts of Gaul were refusing enrolment and tribute. When news came that the Capitol had been burned, men's minds were impressed by it as by a presage from which there could be no escape. With this sanctuary fallen, the fortune of the Roman people seemed buried under its ruins. The Druids, emerging from their secret retreats, openly declared that the last days of Rome had come and those of the Gallic empire were commencing; it was now the turn of the Transalpine nations to rule the world.

The Belgæ, faithful to Vitellius and consequently enemies to the new emperor, were the first to break out into revolt. Two Treviri, Classicus and Tutor, with Sabinus, one of the Lingones, who claimed descent from Julius Cæsar, made an agreement with each other to deliver their country. They first tampered with the Belgian and German auxiliaries and then with the legionaries themselves, assuring them that the troops of Vespasian were on the way to punish them for their hesitation to take the oath to him. Two legions swore fidelity to the Gallic empire upon the standards presented to them by Civilis—an unheard of step, and only to be understood when we remember that these legions were now entirely made up of provincials. The 5,000 men whom Civilis with the German infantry held besieged in Vetera Castra accepted like terms. The barbarians, however, were not willing to let their prey escape them. The Romans marched out, confiding in the oath; but five miles from their entrenchments the barbarians fell upon them. Those who escaped the first massacre fled towards the camp, but the barbarians had already pillaged it, and they now set it on fire, and the fugitives perished in the flames.

Civilis had at last obtained his revenge and he now cut his

hair. His ambition rising with his fortunes, he refused to concern himself in a foreign cause. Neither he nor any of his followers consented to take oath to the Gallic empire. He dreamed of something different—a vast dominion of which his own country should be the centre, and Gaul and Germany the provinces. A prophetess, Velleda, was at that time in great renown among the Germans. She was a young girl of the Bructeri, and dwelt alone in a tower in the depths of a forest. No stranger was allowed to see her; one of her relatives, a sort of interpreter to the divinity, received questions and brought back her replies. She had predicted the destruction of the legions, and her credit was increased upon the fulfilment of the oracle. Civilis, who had already obtained her devotion to his interests, sent her as a gift a legate whom he had made prisoner. In his schemes, the Rhine being no longer a frontier, the fortifications which guarded it were to be destroyed. Colonia Agrippina (Cologne), the city of the Ubii, refused to destroy its walls and frankly enter the league; but from the Alps to the ocean all the camps were burned with the exception of Mogontiacum (Mayence) and Vindonissa (Windisch), and the troops were dispersed. Two legions were sent by Classicus to Trèves; they obeyed, advancing slowly amidst the insulting joy of the Gallic tribes; a squadron of Italian horse alone refused and shut themselves up in Mayence.

In the interior of the country Sabinus excited the Lingones to revolt, and had assumed the title of Cæsar. But it was the opinion of many that a Roman would do as well for an emperor as one of the Lingones. This was the feeling of the Sequani, who defeated Sabinus in an attack made upon them; the chief took shelter in a villa belonging to him, and being closely pressed set the building on fire, and is believed, like Sacrovir, to have perished in the flames.

This defeat reduced the zeal of the partisans of independence. In a general assembly gathered at Rheims, the Treviri and the Lingones spoke loudly for war. They were reproached with having betrayed the cause of Gaul in the time of Vindex; then it was asked who should conduct the operations, give orders, and take the auspices. After the victory, where place the seat of empire? Dissensions thus appearing before the struggle, what might be

Lithog. by W. & A.K. Johnston, Edinburgh & London.

expected after the triumph? They were too much Romanized to conceive anything except an empire, while they were still too Gallic to forget the rivalries which made their designs impossible. Moreover, Civilis and his Germans held themselves aloof with an air of displeasure. "Do you prefer," the Remi asked, "to be called the subjects of the Catti and the Bructeri rather than citizens of Rome?" Finally the assembly sent orders to the Treviri, "in the name of Gaul," to lay down their arms.

This, however, did not at all reduce the courage of the rebel states. But the leaders were not equal to the situation. Civilis wasted time in the pursuit of a relative whom jealousy had driven into the Roman party, and who was now attacking him with Tongrian and Nervian auxiliaries. Classicus enjoyed the pleasures of power, as if he were in the midst of peace; and Tutor made no effort to occupy the passes of the Alps. Four legions at this moment were passing over them, under command of Petilius Cerialis, an able general; Mucianus himself was about to follow with Vespasian's youngest son, whom it was desirable to send away from Rome. Two other legions were coming from Spain, and the fourteenth had been recalled from Britain. "Seven legions," cried the Remi in alarm, "are upon us." Tutor marched to meet the troops who were emerging from Helvetia, and at sight of the eagles his legionaries went over to the Romans. He fell back, but was surprised at Bingen. The defeat relieved Mayence and all the valley of the Rhine as far as Vetera Castra. The legions encamped at Trèves, who were captives rather than rebels, immediately set up the name of Vespasian upon their standards, and Cerialis, scornfully sending away the Gallic auxiliaries, that the Empire might, as he said, itself alone avenge the insults offered to it, marched upon the last army, which protected the city of the Treviri. It was readily dispersed and its chiefs made prisoners. With prudent moderation, Cerialis received into his camp the old legions of the Rhine, and forbade that mention should be made of what had occurred. The soldiers were eager to sack the city of Trèves, but he restrained them. "Our fathers," he said, "came into Gaul only to put an end to your discords and to save you from the Germans. As a reward of our victories we ask of you only the means of maintaining you in a condition of peace.

But to have peace we need soldiers; for soldiers there must be pay; for this military pay there must be tribute. All else is held in common between us and you. You yourselves commonly command our legions and rule our provinces. There is no privileged class and none excluded from power. If we have good rulers, remote as you are, you still share with us in our prosperity; if our rulers are cruel, we, who are nearest, are the first to suffer. . . . . Enslaved by Classicus and Tutor, would your taxes be less? Were the Empire of Rome to disappear—a misfortune which may the gods avert!—what would be left upon earth but a universal war among the nations? Eight hundred years of prosperity and discipline have been needed to raise this mighty power, which could not fall without crushing the world beneath its ruins. . . . . Wherefore, love and cherish peace and the Roman Empire, which is serviceable alike to the conquered and the conquerors." These words were true, and were echoed throughout all the country of Gaul. The Lingones gave in their submission.

Civilis made an attempt to shake the fidelity of the Roman general. He wrote to Cerialis that Vespasian was dead, that Rome and Italy were a prey to civil war, that Mucianus and Domitian were without power and without consideration; that, if the Roman general desired the empire of the Gauls, he himself with his Batavi would be content with the peaceful possession of their own country. Cerialis having made no reply whatever to this overture, the allies advanced to attack him. For a moment his army was imperilled, but a severe defeat which they inflicted upon the troops of Civilis determined the defection of Cologne. The inhabitants of that city murdered all the Germans within their walls; and after having intoxicated a whole cohort of Chauci and Frisii, the best troops in the army of Civilis, who were to defend Tolbiacum, they set that town on fire and burned it. At this time arrived the legion from Britain and subdued the Nervi and Tongri.

Civilis thus saw his grand schemes melt away. His patriotic attempts outlasted his designs of personal ambition. To protect his island of the Batavi, he strove, but in vain, to defend Vetera Castra. Driven thence, he sheltered himself beyond the Vahalis, cut the dike of Drusus in order to lay the country under water, and himself, with 113 chief men of the Treviri, went over into

Germany in the hope of obtaining the assistance of the German tribes. During his absence Cerialis crossed the Vahalis, but narrowly escaped capture, and the Germans triumphantly carried off to Velleda the prætorian galley which they had been able to seize. The rains and freshets of the autumnal season were serviceable to the cause of the revolted nations. The Romans, without provisions or shelter and on a marshy ground, grew weary of the struggle; the Batavians were also fatigued by the turbulence of the Germans

Roman Soldiers burning a Village, from the Column of Antonine (L. Stracke, *op. cit.*, i.).

and by the authority which Velleda claimed for herself. In circumstances like these both parties are willing to come to an understanding. The two chiefs had an interview upon a bridge over the Vahalis, the bridge having been broken in the middle of the river. Civilis obtained leave to live quietly with his own people, and the Batavi, relieved from all tribute, were only required to furnish to the legions auxiliaries, whose just fame had been increased by this war against the Empire. Civilis, therefore, gained only fame for himself, but liberty for his country.

The insurrection in the two Gallic provinces of Belgium and Germany had failed. Its leaders were dead or else fugitives, and

a severe search instituted by Vespasian in all the cities brought to punishment any who had not perished on the battlefield. The Treviri were deprived of their liberty.[1]

One of the chiefs, however, and the one most compromised, Sabinus, made his escape. After the burning of his villa he might easily have made his escape into Germany, but he could not persuade himself to part from his young wife, Eponina, and he concealed himself in an underground hiding-place, whose entrance was known only to himself and two faithful freedmen. He had

Barbaric Tribes giving Allegiance, from the Column of Antonine (*ibid.*, p. 85).

been believed dead, and his wife, sharing the opinion of those around her, had been for three days plunged in inconsolable affliction. Mysteriously informed that Sabinus was still alive, she concealed her delight, and was conducted to his place of refuge, where, in the end, she determined also to remain. After seven months the husband and wife ventured to emerge, and made a journey to Rome for the purpose of soliciting pardon. Being warned in season that the petition would be in vain, they left Rome without seeing the emperor and again sheltered themselves

[1] From this period the name of the Druids no longer appears in history; but many times again we find mention of the Druidesses, who, in 234, predicted the death of Alexander Severus, whom Aurelian consulted in 273 to know if the Empire would descend to his posterity and who promised it to Diocletian. It will be seen that they were merely fortune-tellers. However, Ausonius counted an Armorican Druid among his ancestors. (*Professores*, x. 22.)

in their subterranean refuge. Here they lived during nine years; being at last discovered, Sabinus was taken to Rome, where Vespasian ordered his execution. Eponina had followed her husband, and she threw herself at the emperor's feet. "Cæsar," she cried, showing her two sons who were with her, "these have I brought forth and nourished in the tombs that two more suppliants might implore thy clemency." Those present were moved to tears, and even Vespasian himself, but he remained inflexible. Eponina then asked to die with him whom she had not been able to save. "I have been more happy with him," she said, "in darkness and under the ground, than thou in supreme power." Her second request was granted her. Plutarch met at Delphi one of their children, who related to him this sad and touching story.

Vespasian. Statue found near Rome (H. d'Escamps, *op. cit.*, No. 77).

Vespasian might safely have manifested clemency in this case. Gaul was resigned to remaining Roman. Some few patriots did indeed preserve the memory of the standard which a hundred and twenty years before had been beaten down before Alesia by Julius Cæsar, and had now been reared once more for "the empire of the Gauls." But we must not exaggerate their number or the importance of the war just described. It had been principally carried on by a people who were more German than Gallic, by a man whose thoughts were not mainly devoted to Gaul; and the Roman troops, whom we

have seen besieged and conquered, were merely what remained when the legions themselves had been called away into Italy. So soon as the latter returned peace was at once restored. The great bulk of the Transalpine nations had not responded to an appeal which they did not understand, and those who had taken up arms quickly returned into their usual routine of life on being summoned to do so, as we have seen, by Cerialis. Internal order was at once re-established, and as from without invasion no longer threatened or had not yet begun to threaten, there began for Gaul, as for the Empire, an age of prosperity which counts among the good ages of the world, which is known as the period of the Antonines. To this era Gaul contributed something, since she furnished, if not the ablest, at least the most respected, of these emperors, Antoninus Pius, the adoptive father of Marcus Aurelius.

II.—The Jewish War (66–70).

We must now pass to the other extremity of the Empire, where a less dangerous but more difficult war was drawing to its close, one which has remained one of the great events of history, because in it an entire people seemed to perish.

The last moments of this people present moreover an interesting study in historic psychology, on account of the strange moral condition in which the Jews were at that time, a sort of intoxication or divine delirium, produced by religious exaltation, which led them to hope against all hope. It is a phenomenon which re-appears in times of religious ferment, with the same contrasts, in all ages, of abominable cruelty and sublime devotion, of passion which obscures the conscience or veils the reason, and faith which may make of the same man an executioner or a martyr. And yet, terrible as the spectacle may often be, we are less pained than in confronting the base appetites which we have been obliged to depict.

The Jews have been several times mentioned in this history, in the time of Pompey, Cæsar, and Augustus. We have seen how they had planted throughout the East and even in Italy their colonies and synagogues, and their belief in one God, which was

unsettling the authority, already so compromised, of the pagan gods, and preparing the way for the doctrines of Jesus.

Augustus had made their king Herod his friend, or rather the instrument of his designs in this part of the East. After the death of this prince the Jews had requested of the emperor that Judæa might be annexed to the province of Syria. He chose rather to maintain a national government, which relieved him of the burden and vexations of a military occupation. Archelaus received his father's crown. Ten years later, however, the new king, accused at Rome by his subjects, was deposed without even a hearing and Judæa placed under the rule of procurators (6-37).

A caprice of Caligula restored this kingdom. Agrippa, grandson of Herod, had dared to pay court to the young Caius during the lifetime of Tiberius. "Shall I see the time come," said he, "when this old man will depart to the other world and leave you master of this?" The remark was reported to the emperor. A Roman noble would have paid for it with his life; the Jewish prince escaped with a mild imprisonment. Caligula, however, requited his friend for the danger he had incurred; after his accession he appointed him king, giving him a gold chain as heavy as the fetters he had worn. The favour of Claudius completed this unexpected good fortune; new provinces were added to his kingdom, and he reunited, for the last time, all that Herod the Great had possessed. But at his death (44), his son Agrippa, too young to succeed him, had only a tetrarchy, and Judæa, with Samaria, again came under the rule of procurators who, nominally subordinate to the governor of Syria, were in reality invested with independent authority.

No province at that time needed the firm hand of the Empire as did this unhappy country, for several years a prey to that incurable anarchy which announces the last days of a people. There was no longer any social bond and public power. Assassinations occurred daily in the streets of Jerusalem, even in the temple in the midst of the throng and during solemn festivals.[1] The roads were not even safe for the messengers of the emperor, and those

[1] "So they put to death Jonathan the high-priest, and not a day passed when they did not kill several in the same manner." They were religious assassinations. (Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, ii. 23.)

whom Josephus, the friend of the Romans, treats as robbers, sorcerers, and impostors, but whom the multitude called prophets and Christs raised up by Jehovah,[1] formed bands numerous as an army.

The evil did not all arise from the absence of an energetic government. The prophetic spirit was the soul of this people. Very skilful in conducting their private interests, in promoting

Ruins of the Temple of Augustus, built by Herod at Samaria.

their fortune in traffic, the Jews failed when required to rise to general ideas. Science, which demands a cold reason, art, which presupposes a study of nature, the perception of relations and the harmony of proportions, were always foreign to them. Apocalypses, for which they had acquired a taste among the Mazdeans during the Captivity, had become their grand literary form. In times of crisis they expressed in that mode all passion, love, or hope. The *Apocalypse* of St. John is the highest expression and has remained the model of these symbolical works, in which the *Seer*

[1] S. Matthew (xxiv. 11, 24) speaks of false Christs and false prophets.

tells the secrets of the grave, reveals the decrees of the Most High, and announces to the rulers of the earth the chastisements which await them. Many had preceded, many followed it. It was a style of literature, Persian in its origin, which offered great resources to the poet and the believer. In the *Revelation* sent to the Seven Churches in Asia the Apostle continues, against the enemies of the New Jerusalem, against "the great harlot which makes drunk the nations with the wine of her fornication," the revolutionary part played by the ancient prophets against the impious kings and the persecutors of Israel. He imitates their policy, he borrows their most terrible images, and by his burning words, by the combination of sublime visions and strange inventions, by his descriptions of oriental wealth and barbaric ornament, he pleased the unhealthy imagination of the Southern races. Written between the death of Nero and the fall of Jerusalem, this *Apocalypse* exercised no influence upon the revolt of the Jews, but it helps us to understand the mental state of a people whose intelligence, at once sterile and over-prolific, now, through sheer force of misery, went into the most mystical reveries. Like the soul broken by grief, they had become superstitious and fearful under the load of misfortune. Everything dismayed them; everything also caused them to hope. They passed continually from despondency to confidence, from love to hate. After having invited the Roman dominion they repulsed it; after having a hundred times suffered their country to be parcelled out and their population distributed like a flock at the will of the purchasers, they now spoke only of national independence and were going to die for it.

They still believed in their holy temple and fulfilled the external rites of their religion. But when they saw that their doctrine and their morality, so pure and so beautiful, had not been able to save them, and that they, the people of Jehovah, the elect race, must obey those whose idols had been lashed by the keen irony of Isaiah, they clung with the strength of despair to the sole hope which remained to them, the advent of a messiah.[1] The

[1] See vol. iii. p. 624 *sq.*, in what a state of expectation this people was. It is the mental condition of our Algerian Arabs. There is the same contempt for a higher civilization which they do not comprehend, and for laws purely rational, which seem to them miserable by the side of their civil and religious law revealed by God himself, and the same tenacious hope in messiahs or marabout deliverers. See also vol. iv. p. 181.

Christians told them indeed that the Messiah had come, that his kingdom had begun, and that his law had been carried even into the court of Nero. In the sacred victim fastened to the cross of Golgotha they refused to see the Saviour who was to make them rule over the world, and they waited still, listening to every voice that arose, following whoever said to them, "Come and see."

"Nowhere," says the historian Josephus, an eye-witness of the sufferings he recounts, "nowhere did impostors have so fine an

Mount Gerizim.

opportunity; whatever they promised was believed. They shared the country with the robber chiefs. Impious wretches, deceiving the people under false pretence of religion, led them into solitudes where they said God would make manifest by sure signs that he would free the race of Abraham from servitude. An Egyptian false prophet succeeded so well in seducing the people that he assembled nearly 30,000 men on the Mount of Olives. At his voice the walls of Jerusalem were to crumble and the Romans take to flight."[1] Another promised that they should be saved and

[1] *Bell. Jud.*, ii. 23. His flock was dispersed; many perished, but he escaped, and it is not known what became of him. This is why the tribune asked S. Paul when, some time after, the Jews brought the Apostle to him that he might condemn him: "Art thou not then that

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should witness the ending of their misfortunes if they would follow him to the desert. Another invited the people to ascend Mount Gerizim, where he would show them some sacred vessels which Moses had concealed there.[1] Another offered to compel the waters of the Jordan to divide and let him and his followers pass through dry-shod. Others, on the contrary, drew their inspiration from Isaiah and repeated his menaces against the house of Israel. "Four years before war was declared," says Josephus, "a peasant began to cry out: 'A voice from the East! A voice from the West! A voice from the four winds! A voice against Jerusalem and the temple! A voice against the bridegrooms and the brides! A voice against the whole people!' From that time he ceased not to cry day and night: 'Woe, woe to Jerusalem!' On festival days he redoubled his cries; no other words ever issued from his mouth. Those who had compassion for him, those who denounced him, those who ministered to his wants, heard only those terrible words: 'Woe, woe to Jerusalem!' He was apprehended, examined by the magistrates and condemned to the lash. To each question and at every stroke he responded without complaint: 'Woe to Jerusalem!' Discharged as a madman, he went throughout the country repeating his mournful prophecy. For seven years he continued to cry incessantly in this manner without losing his voice. At the time of the final siege of Jerusalem he shut himself up in the city, ever making the circuit of the walls and crying: 'Woe to the temple! Woe to the city! Woe to the people!' Finally he added: 'Woe to me!' and at the same time was slain by a stone hurled from a machine."

Scripture itself bears testimony to this latent ferment which was agitating the minds of the people. The *Acts of the Apostles* speak of Simon the sorcerer, of the false prophet Elymas, and quote the remarkable words of Gamaliel: "Before these days," said he, "rose up Theudas, giving himself out to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about 400, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were dispersed and came

Egyptian?" (*Acts*, xxi. 38). For the Jews, Egypt was the country where wonder-working was taught. (Derenbourg, *Hist. de la Pal. d'après les Sources rabbiniques*, p. 203, n. 2.)

[1] *Ant. Jud.*, xviii. 4. They went there in great numbers, bearing arms. Pontius Pilate dispersed the gathering and was recalled after this event.

to nought. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the enrolment, and drew away some of the people after him; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered abroad." [1]

The preaching of the new Gospel did not restore calm to their souls, for at Jerusalem the Christians were persecuted, and the more they spoke of an unknown Messiah the more did the Jews cherish their hope in him whom they still expected, not lowly and persecuted, but glorious and powerful. To attain the promised dominion national independence must first be preserved, and at this thought all hearts were filled with courage. Those whom Josephus calls robbers were the first to spread the whisperings of revolt, for, just as in the time of Mattathias and of Judas Maccabæus, these robbers were bold patriots who refused to serve the foreigner. Let us be just towards this nation which has given to the world the greatest example it has yet beheld: it is not a few men, nor an army, it is almost an entire people which is about to die for its faith and its liberty. It is true, this sacrifice may not have been necessary; it may have proved useless to the race of those who made it as well as to humanity. But the historian finds so many wars undertaken from reprehensible motives, that he cannot refuse his sympathy to those who have fought and fallen in the name of country and religion.

The Roman rule in Judæa had long been mild, as elsewhere, even more than elsewhere, because the Jews of Palestine were especially protected by the first emperors. Under Tiberius they had had in twenty-two or twenty-three years only two procurators, and the last one, Pontius Pilate, had been recalled to give account for certain seditious movements which he had too severely repressed.[2] Under Claudius, a Roman soldier who had torn up a copy of the *Pentateuch* in one of the villages, was decapitated, and a procurator who had allowed himself to be bribed was condemned to exile. In the same affair, the emperor sent to Rome a tribune of the soldiers, who was drawn on a hurdle through the streets of the city and then put to death.[3] To this stern justice was

[1] *Acts*, v. 36-39.

[2] He did not arrive at Rome till after the accession of Caligula, who, according to Eusebius (*Hist. Eccles.*, ii. 7), exiled him to Vienne in Gaul, where he killed himself in despair.

[3] Josephus, *Ant. Jud.*, xx. 56, and *Bell. Jud.*, ii. 12.

joined respect for their worship. No Roman officer entered the capital without ascending to the temple, there to adore the national God. Every year victims were offered in the name of the prince. This consideration went so far as to take care that governors were given the Jews who would be agreeable to them. It was at the request of the high-priest Jonathan that Felix, brother of the freedman Pallas, obtained the procuratorship of Judæa (52–60).[1]

But, during the last years of Claudius and under the reign of Nero, the excesses of the proconsuls of the Republic were renewed. Vintidius Cumanus at that time governed in Galilee, Felix in Samaria and Judæa. The eternal rivalry between the Jews and the Samaritans, and the hatred of the latter for their neighbours in Galilee, armed these populations against each other. The procurators shut their eyes to mutual robberies, on condition that the lion's share of the spoils should be given to them. On complaint of certain Jews, Claudius punished Cumanus, indeed, but Felix, a brother of the all-powerful favourite, was enrolled by the governor of Syria among the judges before whom the complainants were to set forth their grievances. Encouraged by this mark of his influence, Felix "continued his cruelties and acts of violence, exercising the sovereign authority with the odious and greedy baseness of a slave."[2] He retained the apostle Paul in prison to extort money from him, and when the high-priest Jonathan reproached him with his exactions he procured his assassination.

This was dangerous conduct; for, if the people, incited by messiahs and rendered fanatical by the lower orders of priests whom their chiefs despoiled of their tithes,[3] flocked in throngs to join the bandits and thus gave brigandage the colour of a patriotic uprising against the foreigner, the rich and the noble sought in

[1] Josephus, *Ant. Jud.*, xx. 8. Felix had married a Jewess (*Acts*, xxiv. 24). See, in Josephus (*Ant. Jud.*, iv. 3, 10), the discourse of the high priest Ananus, which renders full justice to the Romans. True, it is their friend Josephus who is speaking by his mouth.

[2] Tac., *Ann.*, xii. 54. It was already, as is evident, the system of government which the Turkish pachas have established in this unhappy country.

[3] For some time the chiefs of the priesthood had sent their servants to seize by violence the tithes which were by law due to these priests, and kept possession of them without giving to the inferior priests a share in them. The latter, reduced to the most frightful misery, went over to the side of the people, who aided them by their charitable gifts, and several times took up arms to enforce rendering justice to them. (Josephus, *Ant. Jud.*, xx. 8, 9.) [We have had in Ireland a condition of things not very dissimilar.—*Ed.*]

the support of the Roman soldiers the security which they lacked for their lives and fortunes. To alienate these would hence have been imprudent, if they had not dreaded the violence of their compatriots more than that of the procurators.[1] Beneath them in fact they beheld fermenting in the multitude, not only the germs of a political and religious struggle, but those of a social revolution—an insurrection of the poor against the rich.

The new Covenant, preoccupied with the weak and the afflicted, had expressed many threats against the mighty. Many took the precepts of Gospel equality literally and in the sense of their social application. Whenever a new doctrine appears there are men who follow it entirely and in its true spirit. But there are also those who keep on its outside, do not penetrate below its surface, and accept only what is agreeable to their passions. This division certainly was evident at the epoch of the promulgation of Christianity. While some looked with Jesus unto heaven, others, as took place so often in the peasant rebellions of the Middle Ages, heard only the words which were applicable to earthly concerns. The first came unto Christ when he preached contempt of riches: "No man can serve two masters: ye cannot serve God and mammon;" or when he taught them to prefer prayer to labour: "Be not anxious for your food, nor for your raiment. Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap nor gather into barns: and your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they? And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow: they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" This doctrine, so much in conformity to the customs of the East, where labour means suffering and is never an imperious necessity, was sufficient to cause the abandonment of some workshops or offices, as it decided Peter to leave his fisher's net and Matthew his publican's seat. But other words, for example these: "The first shall be last, and the last first," were

[1] Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, ii. 31.

doubtless eagerly seized upon by the violent men who were inciting a factious revolution, against the superior clergy whom Jesus attacked as blind keepers of the law, and against the rich unto whom the gentle master of the afflicted almost closed the avenues to heaven. His disciples were more specific in their teachings. At Jerusalem they required the faithful to have all things in common. What St. James wrote "to the tribes of the dispersion," he surely declared to the Jews at the capital, whose church he governed for twenty-nine years: "As the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun ariseth with the scorching wind, and withereth the grass: and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his goings." "Do not the rich oppress you, and themselves drag you before the judgment seats?" And further on: "Go to now, ye rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you. Behold, the hire of the labourers who mowed your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth out: and the cries of them that have reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived delicately on the earth, and taken your pleasure: ye have nourished your hearts in a day of slaughter."[1] We have had, unfortunately, too long an experience of popular revolutions not to suppose that these words, falling into the furnace in which men's minds were seething, added new fuel to the flame. Even those who rejected the new doctrine retained its denunciation of the rich, which was so much in harmony with their desires.

When war broke out, the first acts of the rebels were the burning of the office of public records in which the debtors' obligations and contracts were consumed, the murder of the high-priest and some of the principal citizens, and finally the destruction of the palace of King Agrippa and Queen Berenice.

The Zealots placed themselves at the head of this factious insurrection. This sect had originated fifty years before, and, recognizing in heaven or on earth no master save God alone, had already a score of times attempted to break at one blow the yoke of Rome and that of the priesthood. The attempts of the Zealots

[1] S. James (*Epist.*, i. 11; ii. 6; v. 1, 5). See also, *Acts*, v. 1–11, the death of Ananias and Sapphira.

had long found expression in acts of violence. They had fled for refuge to the mountains and there associated themselves with bands of robbers. But, by sheltering their robberies under the excuse of a pious doctrine, they had formed a party which was at the same time political and religious. The band of the *Sicarii*, mentioned with so much horror by Josephus—men who assassinated in the midst of the throng any designated victim—calls to mind in some respects that terrible sect of Ishmaelites which, eleven centuries later and almost in the same locality, filled Europe with dismay at their assassinations.

With leaders of such a character, impostors, magicians, oppressed priests, and fanatic robbers, what people would have kept the peace, especially when the conservatives were themselves urged to revolt by such a variety of sentiments: by love for their country, for the religion of their ancestors, and for liberty; by implacable hatred against the friends of the foreigner, who were thriving upon their misfortunes; above all by a firm belief in an unlimited power which had been promised them, and whose hour had now come?[1] What causes for a terrible explosion! It was in the year 65 that it burst forth, and five years later it had swept away everything—the city, its temple, and its people.

The spark which kindled the conflagration started from the city where the two religions, the two civilizations, brought face to face by Herod, became mutually exasperated by daily contact. While the Jews of Cæsarea were assembled in their synagogue, a Greek, for the purpose of insulting their rites, went to the door of the house and sacrificed some birds. From this a riot ensued, followed by complaints before the procurator Gessius Florus, who decided against the Jews, notwithstanding that they had given him eight talents to purchase his support. On hearing this the people of Jerusalem insulted the governor. He responded as those who have swords at their command usually do: his troops charged the multitude. Many were slain, others imprisoned, and some, in spite of their position as members of the equestrian rank of Rome, were lacerated with the scourge and afterwards crucified. In vain did

[1] Eleazar, leader of the active faction, was the son of the old high-priest Ananias, and one of the prominent persons of the city; two princes of the royal family of Adiabene, a lieutenant of Agrippa II., etc., were also of the national party.

King Agrippa,[1] the Sadducees, the Pharisees, the high-priests, and the rich interpose between the insurgents and the Roman troops. Urged on by the Zealots the people hastened to take possession of the impregnable fortress of Masada, where the arsenal of Herod had been, and then came back to assail the advocates of peace in Jerusalem. As a declaration of war against the emperor himself, Eleazar refused to permit the sacrifice of offerings made in his name (May, 66).

Coin of Cæsarea.[3]

Gessius Florus had retired to Cæsarea. Left almost to themselves[2] the rich opposed the insurrection. For seven days fighting went on in the streets. But the *Sicarii* had time to hasten down from their mountains. As soon as they came to take part in the struggle it was quickly decided. The chief persons were driven from the upper city, their palaces were set on fire, and those who fell into their hands were put to death. Roman soldiers had been left by Florus at Jerusalem. These defended themselves in the towers of Hippicus, Phasael, and Mariamne, until, after exhausting their resources, they threw open the gates upon stipulation that their lives should be spared; they were massacred though it was the Sabbath day.

Coin of Scythopolis.[4]

When the report of these events went abroad, the hatred of the Greeks, for a long time restrained, burst forth against this people upon which the wrath of Rome was of necessity about to descend. In the capital of Egypt 50,000 Jews perished as the result of a riot; in Cæsarea 20,000, at Scythopolis 13,000, at Damascus 10,000, at Ascalon 2,500. All the cities of Syria, with the exception of Antioch, Apamea, and Sidon, had similar executions. Everywhere the populace resented the equality which the senate had decreed between them and an odious

[1] The son of the friend of Caligula and Claudius. At the death of his father he had received only a tetrarchy. Afterwards the Romans permitted him to assume the title of king.

[2] Agrippa, however, sent them 3,000 soldiers.

[3] Astarte standing; bronze money of Nero, struck at Cæsarea, bearing the inscription, "Cæsarea, near the harbour of Augustus." Herod, who had built this city in honour of Augustus, had constructed there a harbour as large as that of the Piræus, and protected against the violence of the sea on the south-west by a breakwater of enormous blocks of stone, measuring as much as 50 feet in length, by 18 in width, and 9 in thickness. (Josephus, *Ant. Jud.*, xv. 9, 6.)

[4] A woman with crenelated crown, erect, bearing in her right hand an undefined object; money of Nysa Scythopolis.

race.[1] When the Jews of Palestine beheld the arrival among them of those who had escaped these massacres, they were convinced that a plot had been formed to exterminate their race, and the insurrection at Jerusalem spread throughout the entire country. For the slaughter of the Jews in Syria that of the Greeks in Palestine was a retaliation. In Decapolis and Gaulonitis, at Philadelphia, Heshbon, Gerasa, Pella, Anthedon, Gaza, etc., blood flowed in streams. The Greek population of Scythopolis fled, assisted by the Jews stationed among them to repulse their co-religionists, and then massacred the Jews.

Coin of Gaza.[2]

Meanwhile the governor of Syria, Cestius Gallus, entered Judæa at the head of his troops. He reached Jerusalem in safety, and occupied the new city and the suburb of Bezetha. Assailed, however, by an overwhelming populace, he was forced to make a precipitate retreat, in which he lost 6,000 men, his engines of war, and his baggage (October, 66). This success animated the most timid. Besides, since the massacres at Damascus and Alexandria, no one had dared to speak of laying down their arms. Borne on by fear or by example, all, even the Essenes,[3] accepted this as a final struggle for independence. The Christians alone had nothing to do with these contentions in behalf of a temple and a country which they no longer recognized. Following the advice of their Master,[4] they withdrew from Jerusalem

[1] Ever since the time of Cæsar there had been privileges conferred upon the Jews at the expense of the Greeks.

[2] Diana and another divinity, standing, in a distyle temple. Bronze money of Hadrian, struck at Gaza. ΜΑΓΝΑ was the name of an ancient divinity of the city who has been identified with the Cretan Jupiter. (Eckhel, *Doctr. num.*, iii. 448–454.)

[3] According to Josephus (*Ant. Jud.*, xviii. 1, 5) there were at that time not more than 4,000 of the Essenes, who composed not so much a faction as a kind of religious order, into which admission was granted only after severe tests. They believed in the immortality of the soul and not of the body, in the absolute will of God, and consequently denied the free-will of man. They lived in common, without servants, and had no personal property. Their mode of life was austere; many took vows of celibacy. Every morning they plunged into water to purify themselves; their meals were preceded and followed by prayers. They never took an oath, deeming their affirmation sufficient. They shunned cities, yet wished to have an employment, though preferring agriculture. Their religious severity predisposed them to ecstasies and transports, and hence they believed in the gift of prophecy. (Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, ii. 6; *Ant. Jud.*, xiii. 11; xv. 10; xvii. 13. Cf. Derenbourg, *op. cit.*, ch. x.) An Essene named John was appointed to organize the opposition in the districts of Thamna, Lydda, Joppa, and Emmaus.

[4] *S. Luke*, xxi. 20; *S. Matt.*, xxiv. 16; *S. Mark*, xiii. 14.

with their bishop Simeon, and retired into the wilderness beyond the Jordan.[1] What they now do in respect to Jerusalem they will do later on for Rome; these conquerors of souls and of heaven are unwilling to shut up their doctrine within the confines of a city or of a perishable empire.

A great assembly was held in the temple, after the retreat of

Arch of Triumph of Gerasa.[2]

Cestius, to elect leaders and organize resistance at all points. The chief persons now gave their adherence to the movement, and the moderate party accepted duties. The historian Josephus, of the illustrious family of the Asmonæans, and who was reckoned among the least zealous, had one of the five jurisdictions into which the country was divided, that of Galilee, which from its wealth and

[1] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, iii. 3; S. Epiphanius, *De Ponder. et Mensuris*, 18. They must have been very few in number at Jerusalem, for Josephus does not even mention the name. Yet M. Derenbourg (*op. cit.*, p. 275) believes that the saying of Rabbi Simeon, then at Jerusalem: "Doctrine is not the chief thing, but work," was directed against them and particularly against the Paulinians.

[2] Album of the Duc de Luynes, pl. 44.

population was like a bulwark to Jerusalem. Josephus claims to have organized there as many as 100,000 men whom he accustomed to Roman discipline by frequent exercises. A *sanhedrim* or supreme council, sitting at Jerusalem, had the general direction of operations.

Notwithstanding the contempt professed by Nero for this rising of one of the most insignificant peoples of the Empire, the war was becoming serious. In this rugged and mountainous country, the assailant, despite the number and skill of his troops, could not make vigorous attacks upon impregnable cliffs defended by desperate men. King Agrippa, a tool of Rome, betrayed the cause of his people; but the Jews, who were scattered in great numbers throughout the East, were able to send assistance to their brethren and probably to enlist the sympathies of some of the communities where they dwelt. We find Babylonians, Adiabeni, and Arabs among the defenders of Jerusalem. Josephus expressly declares, "the object was, not so much to chastise the Jews as to retain the rest of the East in allegiance, by checking the disposition of all these nations to throw off the yoke of Rome."[1] This was in reality the opinion of Nero, and it was to his best general, Vespasian, that he intrusted the task of crushing this people which dared to disturb the repose of the world.[2]

In the last months of the year 67 Vespasian entered Galilee at the head of more than 60,000 soldiers. Palmyra had contributed skilled archers. Josephus concentrated his principal forces in Jotapata, and there withstood for forty-seven days all the efforts of Vespasian. When this place fell the rest of Galilee soon submitted. But the wealthy province paid dearly for its dream of independence. The Romans were void of all pity, and from the first day the conflict assumed an atrocious character. Neither age nor sex was spared; if a few prisoners were taken, it was merely that they might be sent to labour at the cutting of the isthmus of Corinth. The Jews themselves anticipated the enemy; they slew their wives and children, and killed themselves over their

[1] He says again in his preface to the *Jewish War:* "The Roman Empire was then agitated by domestic discords. The Jews stirred up a great commotion in the East, to take advantage of this occasion, so that whole nations were apprehensive of being brought into subjection to them, since they had summoned to their aid the Jews who dwelt beyond the Euphrates."

[2] *Augebat iras,* says Tacitus, *quod soli Judæi non cessissent* (*Hist.*, v. 10).

dead bodies. Forty defenders of Jotapata sought refuge, with their chief, in a cavern. The enemy offered to spare their lives, and Josephus desired to accept the proposal, but his companions threatened him with death if he took one step towards departing. He had no other alternative than to propose that they should decide by lot the order in which they should put each other to death. The one first designated was slain by the following one, he by the third, and so on to the last.[1] Josephus was left alone with one of his men, whom he obliged to follow him to the Roman camp, where, as a worthy culmination of this day of cowardice, he promised the Empire, in the name of heaven, to the persecutor of his race (67).

Scenes like these, and even more terrible, were to be re-enacted at Jerusalem, for the Jews, whose faith in another life had been so slow of growth, now thought that those who fell in battle or suffered punishment,[2] the heroes and martyrs, enjoyed immortality. It was already the declaration of what Mahomet taught later: "Paradise is in the shadow of swords."

The Zealots had become masters of the temple, and from this prominent point they over-awed the city, which they deluged with blood. The members of the family of Herod, with the most noble and wealthy citizens, were arrested on suspicion of desiring to make terms with the Romans. They were held as hostages, but it was feared they could not keep them. One day the populace surrounded the prison, into which armed robbers penetrated, and slaughtered the captives. In their religious radicalism the Zealots would no longer recognize a sovereign pontiff chosen from the great sacerdotal families. They cast lots for this office, and a poor and ignorant Levite, who had never ventured beyond his own fields, was, in spite of himself, invested with the robe of the high-priest.

[1] Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, iii. 8, 7. I do not guarantee, of course, that this strange story, related by Josephus himself, is authentic. His vanity was doubly flattered by making this tragic narration, which represented him as miraculously saved by Providence.

[2] Tac., *Hist.*, v. 5. The first clear notion of a life to come is to be found in the *Book of the Maccabees*, ii. 7, 9. Josephus, in the discourse which he claims to have delivered to the forty shut up with him in the cavern of Jotapata, says that those who die, after rendering unto God his due, enjoy eternal glory, that their race abides, that their souls go to dwell in the holiest mansions of heaven, whence they again take up their abode in pure bodies, *ἁγνοῖς πάλιν ἀντενοικίζονται σώμασιν*. This was the belief in the immortality of the soul and metempsychosis which the Sadducees rejected.

Meanwhile the veritable high-priest, Ananus, attempted to rouse the courage of the peaceful citizens. His reproaches were for a moment successful. They took up arms, and under the direction of their accidental leader, forced back the Zealots behind the second inclosure of the temple. There were now three wars in Judæa: that of the armed religious demagogues against Rome and Jewish society; of the defenders of the latter; and that of the Romans hostile to both. As is usual in times of crisis, it was the moderate party which first succumbed.

By a determined effort the political party might have forced the refuge of the demagogues. Ananus, who feared to defile with blood the holy place, contented himself with negligently maintaining a blockade. Many purchased substitutes for this service from the common people, who were in connivance with the enemies of the rich. Informed by their numerous spies of the facility with which the lines might be passed, the Zealots sent out emissaries who reached the districts in the south, where they summoned the peasants (the Idumæans) "to the defence of the house of God which traitors sought to deliver up to the Romans." A vast multitude hastened to surround Jerusalem. They were unable to force an entrance, but one night, during a violent storm which drove the sentinels to seek shelter, the Zealots descended from the temple into the city and opened the gates to the Idumæans. Ananus, hurrying forward at the first alarm, was slain. Many others perished, among whom were the high-priests and such of the rich as had no time to escape. "It was," said the assassins, "the wrath of God and of the people which rested heavily upon them." By day they filled the prisons, by night they emptied them, slaughtering the captives, whose bodies were thrown to the dogs. No one dared manifest his grief and tears. The poor alone and the worthless had nought to fear.[2]

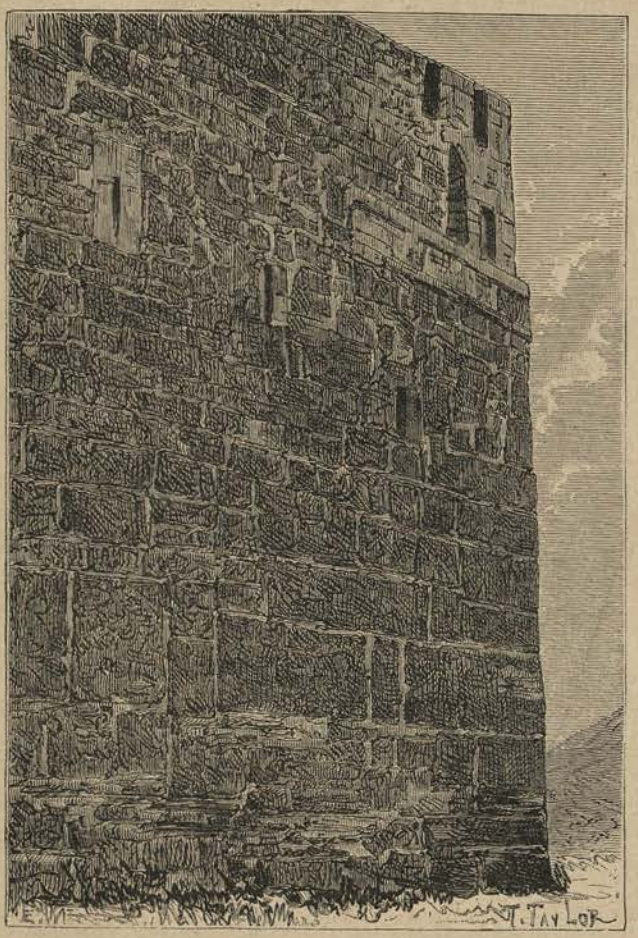
Coin of Ananus.[1]

There was, however, one memorable instance of courage. The

[1] A bunch of grapes and the date: *The first year of the Redemption of Israel.* On the reverse: *Ananus, son of Ananus,* and a palm-tree. Bronze.

[2] Καὶ διέφυγεν οὐδείς, εἰ μὴ σφόδρα τις ἦν ταπεινὸς, ἢ δι' ἀγένειαν, ἢ διὰ τύχην (Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, iv. 6, 1).

Zealots, in order to assume the appearance of justice, appointed a tribunal of seventy judges, before whom they dragged as the first culprit Zacharias, son of Baruch, and a friend of Ananus, charged with holding communication with Vespasian. He easily established



Remains of the Outer Inclosure of the Temple of Jerusalem.[1]

his innocence, and reproached the victorious party for their usurpation and their crimes. Those present uttered cries of fury and sought to slay him before the verdict. The seventy unanimously acquitted the prisoner and discharged him. He was assassinated a short distance from the tribunal. The judges, motionless on their seats, awaited the same end. They were driven from the

[1] De Saulcy, *Mémoire sur les divers appareils de maçonnerie employés dans l'enceinte du Haram-ech-Chérif de Jérusalem*, in the *Mémoires de l'Acad. des inscript.*, vol. xxvi. part 1.

inclosure of the temple, and withdrew amid outcries, insults, and blows.

Vespasian was aware of this state of things at Jerusalem, and, letting the Jews slaughter one another there, he completed the subjugation of the country with a dilatoriness intended to keep him, in the crisis of the Empire at that period, general of a considerable force. He employed the year 68 in bringing into submission, on the left bank of the Jordan, Peræa and several cities of Judæa. In the early months of 69 he invaded Idumæa or Southern Palestine, captured Bethel and Ephraim, to the north of Jerusalem, which then found itself invested, and he was about to begin the siege of the holy city, when the troops proclaimed him emperor on the

Coin of Eleazar.[1]

Coin of Simon Ben Giora.[2]

3rd of July, 69. For nearly a year the civil war diverted his attention from the Jewish war.

The respite afforded to the Jews by the elevation of Vespasian served only to increase their dissensions. Three factions, three armies, engaged in frequent conflicts at Jerusalem. John of Gischala, with the moderate party of the Zealots, held the exterior inclosure of the temple and the approaches of Mount Moriah. Eleazar, leader of the assassins of the high-priest, was shut up in the temple itself, while Simon Ben Giora, with his bands of Idumæans, occupied the upper city or Hill of Zion. Each of these three chiefs aspired to be sole master of Jerusalem, to deliver it from the Romans, and then cause himself to be recognized as the Messiah to whom so great glory was promised. Eleazar, strongly posted in an impregnable position, made sorties which John was powerless to prevent, but which he avenged upon Simon, with whom he disputed the possession of the lower city. At the feast

[1] A wine-pitcher, branch of palm, and the name: *Eleazar the Priest*. Reverse, a bunch of grapes and: *First year of the Redemption of Israel*. Coin of silver.

[2] A bunch of grapes and the name: *Simon*. Reverse, a wine-pitcher, branch of palm, and: *The Deliverance of Jerusalem*. Silver.

of the Passover Eleazar threw open to the faithful the entrance to the temple. John concealed armed men in the crowd, and after a sanguinary conflict forced his adversary to surrender. There was now one faction less; two remained, and these, in the presence of a common enemy, at length ceased to fight among themselves.

In the spring of the year 70 Titus set out from Cæsarea at the head of 60,000 men, and arrived early in March[1] under the walls of Jerusalem. The siege, which lasted five months, is one of the most memorable of antiquity, and the one best known to us, since Josephus, who took part in it, has related the history of it at great length. We cannot give even a summary of his narrative. To do this intelligibly would require us to enter into details concerning topography and military engines which would occupy more space than is at our disposal.[2] We may say, in a word, that the works of the Romans were immense, and the resistance of the Jews equal or superior to all that heroism had ever accomplished elsewhere. Though Vespasian had assembled what we may call a formidable artillery, it took six weeks for Titus to effect a breach in the first inclosure and carry the suburb Bezetha. The lower city seemed captured, but each house became a fortress. A second wall defended it, of which the Romans did not become masters until nine days later. To the misfortunes of war were added those of famine. The siege having commenced during the festival of the Passover, an immense gathering had been shut up in the place. The supply of provisions had soon become exhausted by the requirements of this multitude, and by the order to deliver to the soldiers what each had in reserve. The misery became so extreme that a mother ate her own child. Many persons also attempted to flee, but those who eluded the guards on the walls were seized by the Romans and crucified; at one time as many as 500 perished in this manner daily.

Titus offered to negotiate. "The house of God cannot perish,"

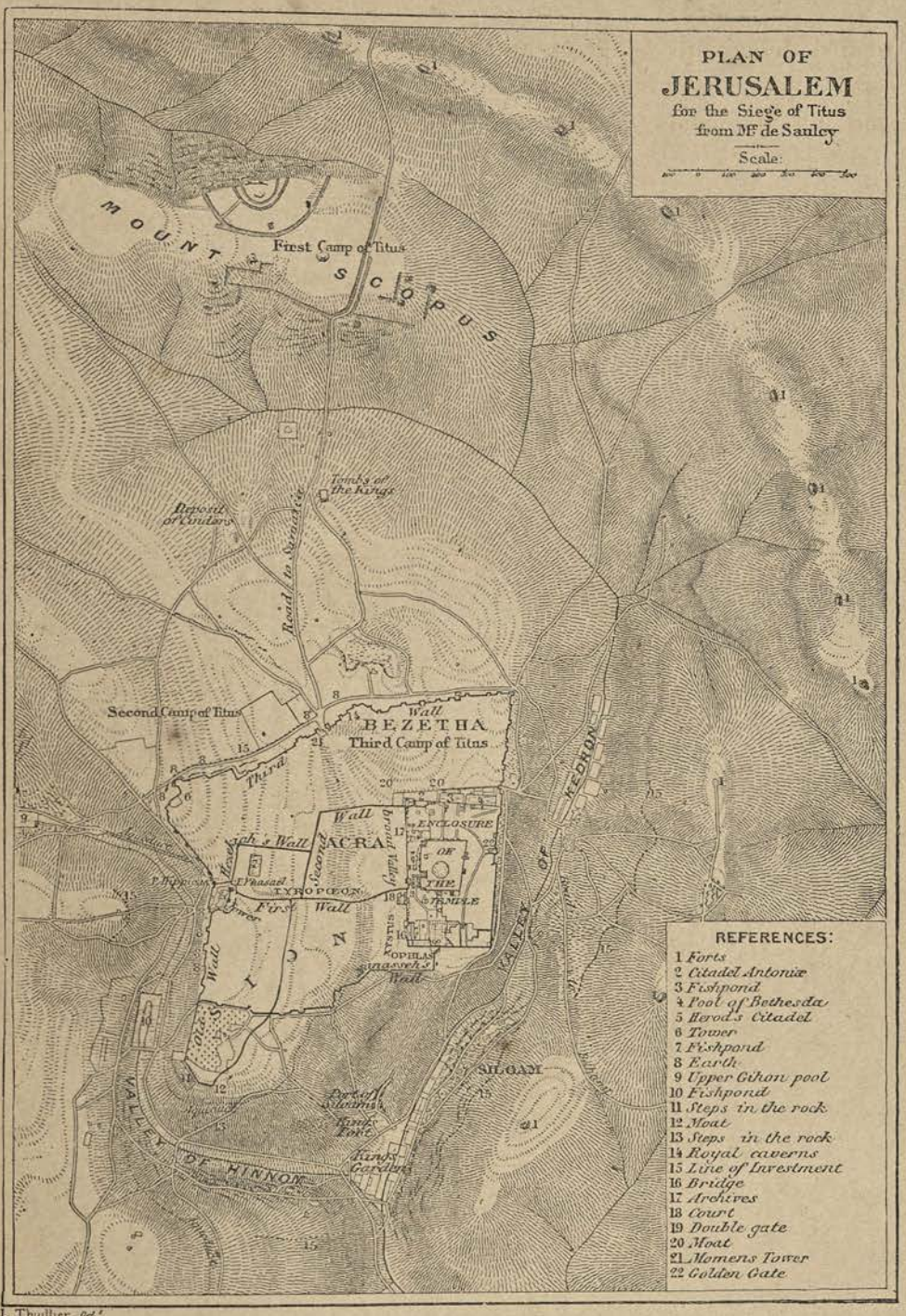
[1] I follow the dates given by M. de Saulcy in his *Journal* of the siege. In order to reconcile them with those usually adopted it will be necessary to place them back about a month, and put the commencement of operations in April and the close at September 8. In regard to the lieutenants of Titus, see Léon Renier, *Conseil de guerre tenu par Titus avant de livrer l'assaut au temple de Jérusalem.*

[2] This labour has besides been accomplished by M. de Saulcy, in his two-fold character, as officer of artillery and archæologist, in his book entitled: *Les Derniers Jours de Jérusalem.*

replied John with fierce enthusiasm, and the struggle continued for some time longer upon the ruins of the walls and amid the smoking fragments of the porticoes of the temple. The Roman

Titus Vespasianus (Bust of the Capitol, No. 22).

general had desired to spare this celebrated sanctuary, but a soldier, impelled, as Josephus says, by a divine inspiration, threw a piece of burning wood into one of the galleries surrounding the temple. The flames quickly spread in every direction, and the Jews, eager



L. Thuillier Del.

Plan of Jerusalem.

for a death which opened heaven to them,[1] dashed through the flames and flung themselves upon the swords of the Romans.

Thus was burned the second temple of Jerusalem, on the 8th of July, in the year of our Lord 70. The upper city still held out; on the 1st of August the Romans captured and set fire to it. Three fortresses which the Zealots occupied in the suburbs were taken one after the other. In the last one, Masada, the Jews,

Arch of Titus at Rome.[2]

when the walls were about to be forced, slew their wives and children, and then, clasping the dead bodies of their loved victims, each one presented his neck to those who had been designated by lot to render this last service to their companions. These in their turns fell by each other's hands; and when the Romans entered the place they found the silence of death, disturbed only by the

[1] Tac., *Hist.*, v. 5. Sulpicius Severus pretends (ii. 30, 6) that Titus, in a council of war, had decided upon the destruction of the temple, "to extirpate the last trace of the Jewish and Christian superstitions;" but most probably Titus knew but little about the Christians and paid little attention to them. Cf. Grätz, *Gesch. der Juden*, iii. 403.

[2] [This arch was erected to Titus after his death, *Divo Tito*. Another had been built to him during his life, but has disappeared. Its inscription, however, is preserved, a hymn of triumph in the lapidary style: *Urbem Hierosolymam omnibus ante se ducibus, regibus, gentibus aut frustra petitam, aut omnino intemptatam delevit* (*C. I. L.*, vi. 944).—*Ed.*]

noise of the conflagration which the Zealots had kindled before seeking death.[1]

This was the last act of the appalling drama. By the computation of Josephus, who, of course, exaggerates all the figures, 1,100,000 Jews must have perished, one-half of them in Jerusalem. Ninety-seven thousand were made prisoners, some of whom were sold, others sent to the quarries in Egypt, and the remainder reserved for the combats of the circus. Some recompense had to

Triumph of Titus (Bas-relief from his Arch of Triumph).

be made to the Syrian cities for their fidelity: Titus gave them games and festivals, in which he exhibited to them these odious Jews torn to pieces in the arena by wild beasts or killing each other like gladiators. At Panæas, to celebrate his brother's festival, he caused 2,500 to perish in the flames or in the amphitheatre, and as many at Berytus on the day of the anniversary of the birth of Vespasian. Only 700 were reserved to follow at Rome the car on which Vespasian and himself made their triumphal entry. Borne in front of them the captives beheld the spoils of the temple, the golden table, the candlestick with seven

[1] This event did not take place until the year 73, and Titus returned to Rome in the spring of 71.

branches, the veils of the sanctuary, and the book of the law.[1] At their head marched the two chiefs John and Simon. The latter, after the festivities, was conducted to the Forum and there beaten with rods and afterwards beheaded. The other died in prison. Medals struck to commemorate this war represent a woman in tears, seated at the foot of a palm tree, with this inscription: *Judæa captive.*[2]

She was indeed captive, and for ever! Of the temple there

Spoils of the Temple of Jerusalem: the Candlestick with Seven Branches, etc. (Bas-relief of the Arch of Titus).

remained only a heap of rubbish; of the holy city, here and there remains of walls blackened by fire;[3] and of the Jewish people, a few remnants scattered among the provinces, where hatred always followed them. Vespasian had already united Judæa to his

[1] These are still to be seen sculptured on the arch of triumph erected at Rome in memory of this event, and under which, it is said, for eighteen centuries no Jew has willingly passed. "It is to be hoped, for the honour of the Jews, that this anecdote is true: long memories are suited to long misfortunes." (Mme. de Staël, *Corinne*, chap. iv.)

[2] Eckhel, *Doctr. num.*, vi. 326. See p. 640.

[3] However, Titus left standing the three towers, Hippicus, Phasael, and Mariamne, the artificial mountain (Haram-ech-Cherif) which supported the temple and is yet visible, as well as several other ruins clearly of Hebrew construction. The Romans afterwards placed a garrison of 800 men on Mount Zion. They had found in their pillage an amount of wealth so vast that, according to the account of Josephus, the value of gold deteriorated one-half throughout Syria.

domain, and ordered all the Jews of the Empire to pay henceforth into the treasure of Jupiter Capitolinus the two drachmas per head which they annually sent to the temple of Jerusalem.[1]

War had now destroyed, almost at the same time, the two sanctuaries of the religious beliefs in which the world was divided. But while one will soon rise again glittering with gold, the other will remain for ever prostrate. It is now no longer needed. The idea which it kept secret in the Holy of Holies has gone forth to be diffused over the world, and by it the conquered of to-day shall be the victors of to-morrow;[2] the fugitives shall become the conquerors; those they thought to crush by force shall obtain dominion by the spirit, and the Jewish God, driven by Titus from the Temple of Jerusalem, shall enter as master into the Capitol of Rome, out of which Jupiter and all "the great gods" shall be hurled. Tacitus says that before the last assault the gates of the temple opened of themselves, that a supernatural voice was heard crying out, "The gods depart," and at the same time there was all the noise of a departure.[3] It was the Mosaic Jehovah, transfigured by Jesus, who left his solitary rock of Zion to become the God of the universe, and to cause to reign in it for centuries, with the second *revealed* law, a new theocracy, full of mildness toward his own, implacable as the Jewish toward his adversaries. But the struggle will recommence some day in the bosom of the *renascent* world; for the two people who have just furnished us this terrible spectacle represent two contrary

Judæa Captive (*Trésor de Num.*).

[1] Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, vii. 6. A colony was established at Cæsarea, whose inhabitants were exempt from this tax, and later, under Titus, from the land-tax (*Digest*, l. 15, 8). Beside the garrison sent to Jerusalem, the Empire maintained troops in Palestine, and, as if the country were "in a state of siege," we find Domitian, in 86, keeping in camp there soldiers of twenty-five years' service. To these he accorded the privileges of veterans, but without the *honesta missio*, that is, without disbanding them. Cf. L. Renier, *Diplômes milit.*, p. 220.

[2] S. Augustine (*de Civ. Dei*, vi. 11): *victi victoribus leges dedere.*

[3] *Hist.*, v. 13.

tendencies of our nature whose opposition is not yet to cease: faith against reason, enthusiasm against science, religion against politics, divine right against natural right.

III.—Vespasian (69–79).

The two wars which we have just described have detained us at the extremities of the Empire; let us now go back to Rome, which we left with its Capitol in ashes and its streets strewn with the dead. The conflicts which had stained it with blood were the expiring convulsions of an anarchy of two years' duration. Beginning in Gaul and Spain, when the downfall of the house of the Cæsars had occasioned a great void in which the Empire was well-nigh overwhelmed, the insurrection had spread into Germany and Illyria, from there into Judæa and Egypt, and civil war "had passed over the universe like a terrible expiation."[1] Yet the spirit of revolt, after having agitated all the legions and all the provinces, is about to subside and become extinguished for want of nutriment; and the Empire will be like some great body which, at the cost of a violent commotion, has thrown off the illness under which it laboured. It retains the disturbing cause; but, for a time at least, calm and vigour will return. There was indeed no longer an emperor to make, nor legions to be bought. Vespasian was accepted by the chiefs and by the armies, by the troops of the East who had elected him, by the partisans of Galba whose statues he set up again, and by the Othonians to whom he furnished an opportunity to blot out the disgrace of Bedriacum. As for the old legions of Germany, destroyed or dispersed, they had now no influence. Accordingly, every one at this time counted on peace, and the senate made haste to decree to the conqueror the honours and rights which constituted the imperial authority: those which

Coins of Titus and of Domitian, Princes of Youth (*Cabinet de France*).

[1] Tac., *Hist.*, iv. 3: *Civilia bella . . . . omnes provincias exercitusque lustraverant velut expiatio terrarum orbe.*

had been successively granted to preceding Emperors.[1] At the same time his two sons Titus and Domitian received the titles of Cæsars and of Princes of Youth, and Mucianus the ornaments of a triumph "for his victory over the Sarmatians."

Delayed by contrary winds, and especially by a prudence which was unwilling to incur any risk, Vespasian was still in Egypt when he learned of the victory of Cremona and the death of his rival. These successes, gained so far away, were loudly proclaimed in that Eastern land so filled with superstitions. Rendered credulous by all that he had witnessed in this land of wonders and by this realization of the interested prophecies of the Jew Josephus, Vespasian began to regard himself as especially favoured of the gods, or found it useful to encourage such a belief. Apollonius of Tyana, whom his rigorous asceticism had rendered subject to visions, was then at Alexandria. His voyages to the mysterious land of the Brahmins, his constant journeyings over the whole Empire, aroused wherever he might tarry a curiosity which he was very careful not to exhaust by too long a stay. If he was not already regarded as a god, as contemporaries of Alexander Severus declare, he at least was thought to foretell the future. Vespasian sought an opportunity of hearing him; more than that, he himself had visions sent from on high, and, to complete the resemblance to the king promised to the East—the frequent topic of the popular imagination—he performed miracles; he healed, in public assembly, a blind man and a paralytic. In the East the marvellous is always necessary. It is the means of action which most seldom fails of its end, and the mind lends itself so readily to it that the one who practises it often becomes the dupe of his own artifice or visions. Then the language, so full of boldness and of metaphors, adds the exaggeration of words

Serapis carrying a Modius.[2]

[1] Tac., *Hist.*, iv. 3. This is the famous *lex regia*, the text of which has been recovered and is now everywhere accessible. Cf. Orelli, *Inscr.*, vol. i. p. 567.

[2] Bust of white agate, two and three-tenths inches high (*Cabinet de France*, No. 278).

to the exaggeration of things, so that an act is very speedily transferred from the natural order of things to the supernatural. The truth, hidden under this double covering which the eye of the people never penetrates, is rarely discovered again, and it matters little. Let Vespasian work miracles; let even the Alexandrians, Suetonius, Tacitus, and Dion, believe that he performed them;[1] and we may remark that in this country and amid such occurrences this conduct was skilful, not doubtless such skill as we admire, but that which always succeeds. Serapis also, the great deity of the Alexandrians, sanctioned the fortune of this upstart, and the plebeian emperor was about to carry back to Rome, for lack of the illustrious lineage of the Cæsars, the adoption by the gods. It was a well-managed affair.

His sojourn in Egypt was not entirely in vain with respect to serious concerns. He made useful reforms in the administration of that country, which had not beheld an emperor since Augustus, and he augmented, notwithstanding the raillery of the Alexandrians, the taxes imposed on that rich city.[2] From there he kept watch over Judæa, Asia, and Africa. Vologeses offered him 40,000 mounted men; he refused them. To quell the insurrection in Pontus he required only a few cohorts of vexillaries.[3] In Africa he exchanged with the legate Valerius Festus, commander of the military forces in Numidia, secret messages which led to his defection. The proconsul who administered this senatorial province, it was said, dreamed of profiting by the general disorder to have himself proclaimed emperor. He was of the illustrious family of the Pisos, and brother-in-law of another member of that house whom Mucianus had recently put to death. The legate's bodyguard, coming from their station to Carthage, relieved Vespasian of this candidate. Africa was now in subjection and some degree of order again established. Leptis and Œa were at war, like Lugdunum and Vienne in Gaul, like Puteoli and Capua in Italy, like all the towns of Sicily, and like many others in the provinces.

[1] *Multa miracula evenere quis cœli favor et quædam in Vespasianum inclinatio numinum* (Tac., *Hist.*, iv. 81; Suet., *Vesp.*, 7; Dion, lxvi. 8). See further on, the last moments of Vespasian.

[2] Dion, lxvi. 8; Suet., *Vesp.*, 19.

[3] Tac., *Hist.*, iii. 48.

The people of Œa, aided by the Garamantes, were ravaging with frightful excesses the territory of Leptis;[1] cohorts of cavalry were sent out who re-established the *Roman peace*. Along the Danube the Sarmatians and Dacians had devastated Mœsia after the withdrawal of the legions. Mucianus, opportunely arriving with the army of Asia, drove them back beyond the river; but when he had retired they returned to the attack. Vespasian at once despatched Rubrius Gallus, who delivered Mœsia and carefully fortified the bank of the river.[2] Thus, before the termination of the civil war, Vespasian inaugurated his reign by establishing peace in the provinces and on the frontiers.

He would have awaited the ending of the war in Judæa so as to return to Rome with Titus. But the siege of Jerusalem being prolonged, he set out, visiting on his way Rhodes and various cities of Asia Minor. He landed in Italy at the extreme point of Calabria, found Mucianus and nearly all the senate at Brundusium, Domitian at Beneventum, with a part of the people. Vitellius had now been dead nearly a year. This time had been well employed. Two dangerous wars had been brought to a close, the disturbed Empire had again found quiet and order. The only traces remaining of the recent agitation were the ruins of the Capitol and a great desire for rest. Mucianus was largely instrumental in this return to peace. He was at once the Mæcenas and the Agrippa of the new Augustus, who had also given to him his ring that he might act everywhere in his name. Leaving the emperor in that distance which enlarges proportions and increases respect, he had assumed the thankless task of checking the reaction against the vanquished, of again bringing the victors under the yoke of discipline, of remanding to obscurity the hero of the civil war, and of holding Domitian in restraint. After the murder of Vitellius, of his son, of his brother Lucius, of Asiaticus, the most odious of his freedmen, who perished on the cross, and of a Piso whose popularity gave him uneasiness,[3] Mucianus had put an end to political executions. The daughter of Vitellius was spared; when Helvidius Priscus and Musonius Rufus denounced the delators he

[1] Tac., *Hist.*, iv. 50; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, v. 5.

[2] Tac., *Hist.*, iii. 46.

[3] Julius Priscus, prefect of the prætorium of Vitellius, killed himself. (Tac., *Hist.*, iv. 2.)

allowed sentence to be passed in a few instances, and then stopped these prosecutions, often attended with danger. Antonius Primus was loudly vaunting his services, and had already rewarded himself by laying hands on the imperial treasury and on the house of the prince, as if they had been the spoils of Cremona.[1] Mucianus treated him with great consideration; he caused the consular ornaments to be decreed to him and granted favours to all his friends; but he took away all power from him and induced him to appear before Vespasian, who received him with honour, without bestowing upon him any further mark of esteem.[2] The war with the Gauls came very opportunely to deliver Italy from embarrassing armies; there still remained at Rome the disbanded prætorians of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, and the Flavian legionaries to whom enrolment in the prætorian cohorts had been promised. As Mucianus made little haste to respond to all these demands a riot broke out; he quelled it, offered them lands which they did not want, and ended by admitting them all to the prætorium. But after the service had been organized he quietly dismissed, one by one, those who had passed the prescribed age or committed some fault.

Domitian crowned with Laurel.[3]

Domitian occasioned him more anxiety. This young prince, nineteen years of age, had been found with Sabinus at the Capitol, and had only escaped under favour of a disguise. On account of the danger he had incurred he thought himself one of the victors and affected sovereign airs. In one day he distributed twenty places. Vespasian wrote to him: "I must esteem myself happy that you have not thought of appointing an emperor also."[4] When the revolt of the Gauls became known, Domitian, jealous of his brother, wished to take command of the army and left Rome.

[1] Tac., *Hist.*, iv. 2.

[2] Tac., *Hist.*, iv. 80. Mucianus sent away from Rome the troops devoted to Primus and prevented Domitian from taking him to himself, *inter comites*.

[3] Cameo of the *Cabinet de France*, No. 241. Agate-onyx of two layers of $\frac{78}{100}$ths of an inch in height by $\frac{58}{100}$ths of an inch in breadth. It is set in a ring.

[4] Suet., *Dom.*, 1.

Mucianus, not daring to quit him, followed him; but at the foot of the Alps they learned of the defeat of Treveri, upon which Mucianus represented to the young Cæsar that there would be little glory in going to finish a war which was ending of itself, and decided him to stop at Lugdunum. It is believed that from this place Domitian secretly sounded Cerialis to ascertain whether the command would be transferred to him in case he should repair to the army. Cerialis avoided a reply, and Domitian, perceiving with chagrin that these old politicians were making sport of him, withdrew from all affairs; henceforth he appeared occupied only with verses and literature.[1] His skilful tutor brought him back to Rome, from which place both went to meet the emperor.

Unfortunately Tacitus fails us again at this point, and this time completely. Nothing has been saved of his *Histories* from the middle of the year 70, and we find ourselves reduced to the mere biographies of Suetonius, to the fragments of Dion, to the abridgments of Aurelius Victor and Eutropius. The majestic stream from which we have drawn and which flowed with brimming banks is now only a meagre thread of water. Of all the emperors Vespasian is the one who loses the most by this, for he was, says S. Augustine, a very good prince and very worthy of being beloved.[2]

He came into power at an age when one is no longer given to change, at sixty years. He had never been fond of gaming or debauchery, and he maintained his health by a frugal diet, even passing one day every month without eating. His life was simple and laborious. When emperor he always employed a portion of the night in public affairs; Pliny the Elder and many others came before day to work with him; and finally, Thrasea and Soranus, the most virtuous of the senate, were his friends.[3] This soldier accustomed to discipline, this upstart who had known want, was just the man needed by the Empire. In the imperial palace he made no change in his habits, lived, as before, like a simple

[1] Tac., *Hist.*, iv. 86.

[2] *De Civ. Dei*, v. 21. Suetonius (*Vesp.*, 8) says of him: *Per totum imperii tempus nihil habuit antiquius, quam prope afflictam nutantemque rempublicam stabilire primo, deinde et ornare.* Aur. Victor (*de Cæs.*, 9) speaks in the same manner: *Exsanguem diu fessumque terrarum orbem brevi refecit.*

[3] Tac., *Hist.*, iv. 7; Suet., *Vesp.*, 20, 21; Pliny, *Epist.*, iii. 5.

private citizen, his door open to all, without remembering injuries,[1] and without pride; laughing at those who desired to make out a genealogy for him, and replying to sarcasms by coarse pleasantries which were always preferable to an order into exile or a sentence to death; capable of gratitude, a rare thing in a prince; bearing to hear the truth and counsel.[2] He gave a magnificent dowry to the daughter of Vitellius, took away none of their paternal estate from the children of those who had fought against him,[3] and allowed Mucianus, whom he twice decorated with the consular purple, to assume the tone and manner of a colleague rather than of a minister; yet without weakness, even for his son Domitian, whom he held in strict dependence. In accordance with the traditions of the first imperial court he received the great familiarly and visited them at their homes without formal preparation. One day they sought to tease him about a person to whom the stars had promised the Empire; he gave him the consulate. "If he becomes emperor," said he, "he will remember that I conferred a favour on him."

Vespasian has not attained a lofty fame; he is known chiefly by the anecdotes of Suetonius and Dion. We have carefully examined his acts, and when we have said that he took Augustus for a model, we have given him all the eulogy which his politic spirit deserves. He had no higher aim than to establish order in the state and in the finances; but he accomplished this, and if his principate, like all the others, made no preparations for the future, it did much for the present. It was a restorative reign, the effects of which were felt for several generations; this service is as valuable as the most brilliant victories.

Following the example of the second Julius, the first of the Flavians resolved to seek in the senate the support of his government. This assembly, debased by so many years of tyranny, needed as much as it did a century before to be submitted to a

[1] One of Nero's freedmen who had insulted him during the lifetime of that prince came and asked pardon; Vespasian repeated the insult to him, and with a laugh dismissed him. A senator and a knight having quarrelled, the first accused the second of having brought reproach upon his rank. The prince decided that it was not lawful to attack a senator with scurrilous language, but that it was fair to return it. (Suet., *Vesp.*, 9.)

[2] *Patientissimus veri* (Tac., *de Orat.*, 3). Cf. Suet., *Vesp.*, 13.

[3] Suet., *Vesp.*, 14.

severe revision. More than this, the civil wars, intrigues, and debauchery, had so decimated the nobility that, if we may believe an old historian, only 200 *gentes* could at that time be enumerated at Rome. This exhausting of the aristocratic blood seemed perilous with regard to the gods, some of whose altars were about to be left desolate; and, in the eyes of the people, there resulted from it a diminution of the prestige of the city, which, like the England of our day, honoured large families and loved their wide-spread existence. Vespasian acted with resolution. Invested with the title of censor in 73,[1] with his son Titus for colleague, he struck from the rolls of the two orders the members deemed unworthy, replaced them by the most distinguished persons of the Empire, and, by virtue of his powers as sovereign pontiff, raised several of them to the patriciate. A thousand Italian or provincial families came to be added to the 200 aristocratic families which had survived, and constituted with these the higher Roman society, from which the candidates for all civil, military, and religious functions were taken.[2] A proof of the extreme care which Vespasian exercised in choosing, as Suetonius and Aurelius Victor express it, "the best," is that in the number of those whom he appointed patricians were found Agricola, father-in-law of Tacitus, who was from Narbonensis, the Spaniard Trajan, the Gaul Antoninus —one the father, the other the grandfather of glorious emperors;[3] and that he initiated the good fortune of Tacitus,[4] that of the

[1] Borghesi, *Œuvres*, vol. i. p. 181.

[2] Suetonius says (*Vesp.*, 9): *Amplissimos ordines exhaustos cæde varia . . . . supplevit . . . . honestissimo . . . . Italicorum ac provincialium allecto.* Aur. Victor (*de Cæs.*, 9) states more precisely: *Lectis undique optimis viris mille gentes compositæ, quum ducentas ægerrime reperisset, extinctis sævitia tyrannorum plerisque.* In this phrase, *gentes* cannot be taken to mean "patrician families." At the time of Aur. Victor the very name of patrician, in the antique sense of the word, had disappeared, since it is found for the last time in the edict of Diocletian upon the *maximum*, and Gaius had long before said that the *gentilicium jus* no longer existed. Hadrian's secretary, who was well acquainted with the reform of Vespasian, does not speak of *gentes*, and his reasoning indicates that the patriciate not being obligatory except for certain religious functions, they were not required to be lavish of a title still greatly respected, since the emperors assumed it at their accession, but which was of very little account in the State. This profusion had lessened the value of it at a time when political reasons advised the preservation of its illustrious character. Aur. Victor, in *De Vir. ill.* 14, employs indifferently the words *gens* and *familia*; his thousand *gentes*, then, were a thousand families called to Rome: a part for the senate, a part for the equestrian order, some for the patriciate, others for offices, for the ranks (*allectus inter prætorios*, etc.).

[3] Tac., *Agric.*, 9: *Inter patricios adscivit.* Capitolinus, *Ant. Pius*, 1, and *Anton. Philos.*, 1.

[4] Tac., *Hist.*, i. 1.

Cornutus Tertullus of whom Pliny the Younger speaks with so high commendation,[1] of Licinius Sura, whom Trajan made almost his colleague, of the Moor Lusius Quietus, one of the most skilful generals of that epoch, in fact, of so many others, old Romans or new men, whom he sought out in all conditions and in all the provinces.

Claudius had understood that this mode of recruiting the senate was a necessity of the imperial government; Nero himself had summoned to high functions the Aquitanian Vindex and a converted Jew, Tiberius Alexander. But no emperor since Cæsar had applied this liberal policy so largely as Vespasian.

M. Ulpius Trajanus (Trajan the Father).[3]

It is to be regretted that we have no information concerning this renewal of the Roman nobility: an important event, the echo of which is found under Domitian in the lines of Statius,[2] and which had for its sequel the happy epoch of the Antonines. This aristocracy, borrowed by Vespasian from the provincial cities, where it had been trained to public affairs, where it had acquired a taste for economy, simplicity, and order, brought into Rome pure morals, with which the descendants of the proconsuls of the Republic were no longer acquainted—that *gilded youth* whose abominable acts of licence we have seen under Nero. It will furnish the great emperors of the second century, the skilled lieutenants who will second them, and senators who will hereafter conspire only at long intervals, because, unmindful at length of Brutus and Cato, whose images are no longer erected in the *atrium* of these new houses, they will rarely

[1] *Epist.*, v. 15. Cornutus had been *allectus inter prætorios* by Vespasian during his censorship (Orelli, 3,659). We may cite also C. Fulvius Servilianus, who had exercised the highest magistracy at Nemausus (Herzog, p. 123); Q. Aur. Pactumius Clemens, of Cirta, the first African honoured with the consulate (L. Renier, *Inscr. de l'Alg.*, Nos. 1,807 and 1,808); C. Salv. Liberalis Nonius Bassus, who was four times *quinquennalis* and the patron of Pollentia, but who resided at Rome, where he became known as an advocate (Borghesi, vol. iii. p. 178); the Spaniard Herennius Senecio, etc.

[2] *Silv.*, iii. 3, 143: . . . . *In cuneos populum quum duxit equestres.*

[3] Bust, crowned with laurel, on lapis-lazuli. Mutilated cameo, $\frac{81}{100}$ths of an inch by $\frac{78}{100}$ths; to whom attributed is uncertain. (*Cabinet de France*, No. 239 of the Catalogue.)

yield to the evil temptations which gave their predecessors their illustrious name, the influence of wealth and the fatality of great memories.

To the senate, thus renewed and become the true representation of the Empire, Vespasian submitted all important matters. He was present regularly at the discussions, and when he addressed a message to the Fathers, it was his sons and not his quæstor who went to read it. By his liberal acts he made up to several senators the census required, and established in aid of the poor of consular rank an annual fund of 500,000 sesterces.[1]

Vespasian (*Trésor de Num.*, pl. 20, No. 9).

Suetonius renders him this testimony, that it would be difficult to cite a single individual unjustly punished in his reign, at least unless it were in his absence or without his knowledge.[2] He loved to dispense justice himself in the Forum; and in order to settle the arrears of the civil war by a speedy termination of the innumerable cases which crowded the rolls of the centumviri, he instituted a commission of judges drawn by lot, to restore what had been seized unlawfully in the disorders of the times. In the same spirit he tore up all the treasury certificates, so as to inherit nothing from those unhappy times.

The legions, who had made and unmade five emperors in two years, were no longer attentive to the ancient discipline. He brought them back to it, and putting in practice the saying of Galba, he chose his soldiers and did not buy them. The mutinous

[1] Suet., *Vesp.*, 17.

[2] Suet., *Vesp.*, 15. "He deplored," he adds, "even the most just punishments." An author of the seventh century, John of Antioch, who seems to have drawn from good authorities, says also: . . . . Οὕτως ἦν ἤπιος καὶ προσηνὴς ὡς μηδὲ τὰς εἰς αὐτόν τε καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν γινομένας ἁμαρτίας πέρα τιμωρεῖσθαι φυγῆς . . . . (*Fragm. Hist. Græc.*, vol. iv. p. 578, Didot). Suidas (v. Βεσπασιανός) and Eutropius (vii. 13) say that Vespasian is worthy to be compared with the best princes who have ever reigned: . . . . *optimis comparandus.* [The case of J. Sabinus the Gaul and his wife Eponina, already related, is a sad exception.—*Ed.*]

were subdued, the conquerors even waited long for the promised rewards.[1]

The morals of the times were bad; he did more than the laws to reform them—he set good examples. A young man coming much perfumed to thank him for the gift of a prefecture, he turned away from him with an air of disgust, saying in a stern voice, "I had rather you smelt of garlic," and revoked his appointment. Cato could not have done it better. Accordingly, Tacitus dates from this reign a salutary change. "Vespasian," says he, "at his table and in his garments recalled ancient simplicity. The desire to please and to resemble the prince accomplished more than laws, punishments, and fear."

In his work of restoration he included, after the example of Augustus, the official worship, and he also attempted to rekindle expiring piety. We can only catch a glimpse of this reform in the obscurity which envelops the entire history of this prince; but he laboured to this end, for inscriptions which are still to be read celebrate him as "the restorer of the ancient rites, religious ceremonials, and sacred edifices."[2] One of the temples which he built was dedicated to a strange divinity, to Claudius; but Claudius was the author of his good fortune; besides, having been made *divus*, he ought to have his priests and altars; it was according to law.

Third Temple of the Capitol, reared by Vespasian.[3]

Vespasian was not fond of the shows, especially those of gladiators, and in the whole Empire he gave permission only to the Ephesians to institute new games. But he multiplied the number of buildings, for he wished, like Augustus, that the people might gain their living by labour. An engineer agreed to convey some immense columns into the Capitol at a small

[1] The soldiers of the fleet petitioned for shoes, on account of the frequent journeys they had to make from Puteoli or Ostia to Rome; he obliged them to go barefoot. (Suet., *Vesp.*, 8.)

[2] Cf. Orelli, Nos. 746, 1,460, 1,868, 2,364. Vespasian had, in his turn, his priests *sodales* and *seviri Flaviales* (*Id.*, Nos. 2,370 and 2,375).

[3] On this coin are very distinctly seen the six Corinthian columns of the *façade*, the statues of the three divinities of the Capitol, Jupiter seated between Minerva and Juno, who are standing. The tympanum presents the same figures in the same disposition, two men striking the anvil at the angles. At the summit of the pediment, the quadriga which previously adorned the first two edifices. (Saglio, *Dict. des Antiq.*, p. 903 and fig. 1,148.)

expense; he ordered a large sum to be paid him, but declined his proposal, saying: "Suffer me to find maintenance for the poor people."[1] Immediately on his return to his capital he set to work with such ardour that at the expiration of a few months "the streets of Rome, rendered impassable by the misfortune of the times," were found to be in good condition for travel.[2] The same solicitude extended to the provinces.[3] He repaired the aqueducts, enlarged the sources which supplied the fountains of Rome,[4] and, to cause the ruins to disappear which encumbered it since the great conflagration of Nero, he permitted whoever would to occupy the vacant ground and build upon it if the proprietors neglected to do so. They had begun, by his orders, the reconstruction of the Capitol, but the work progressed slowly. When he returned he himself put his hand to the work of clearing away the rubbish, and carried stones upon his shoulder. After that no one dared refuse to work. Three thousand tables of brass, on which were engraved the senatus-consulta and the plebiscita relating to the alliances, treaties, and privileges granted to different peoples, had been destroyed in the burning of the temple. He ordered search to be made everywhere for copies of the acts, and reconstructed the archives of national history. Augustus had raised two altars to Peace; Vespasian built a temple to her, in which he deposited the most precious spoils of Jerusalem;[5] and in order the better to show to the world his peaceful intentions, the old general closed, for the sixth time, the doors of the temple of Janus. He built a forum surrounded by colonnades, in addition to those already existing, and commenced, in the midst of the city, the vast amphitheatre, a mountain of stone of which three-fourths remain standing to-day, striking the beholder with amazement and admiration. Eighty-seven thousand spectators were accommodated on its gigantic tiers. A colossal statue raised near by for Nero, but which Vespasian consecrated to the Sun, gave it its name, the Coliseum.

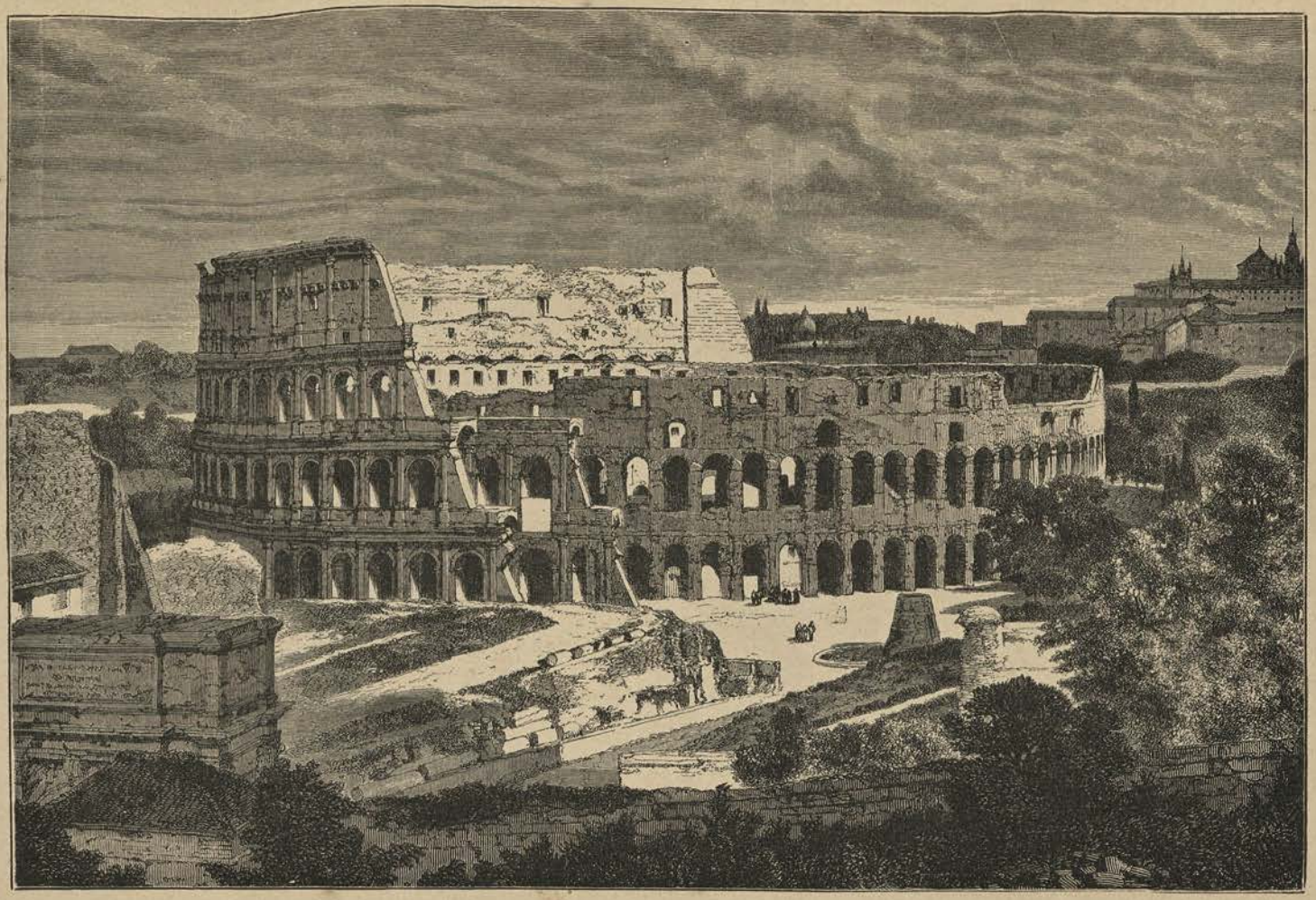
[1] Suet., *Vesp.*, 18.

[2] Inscription of the year 71 (Orelli, No. 742) voted by the senate: . . . . *quod vias urbis negligentia super. tempor. corruptas* impensa sua *restituit.*

[3] An inscription of Thyatira in Asia Minor, of the year 75, bears: *Vias faciendas curavit* (*C. I. L.*, vol. iii. No. 470).

[4] . . . . *aquas Curtiam et Ceruleam* sua impensa *urbi restituit* (Orelli, No. 55).

[5] The Temple of Peace, dedicated by Vespasian in 77, was destroyed by fire under Commodus. It seems that Constantine substituted his basilica for it.



The Coliseum.

He extended the pomœrium; it was his right, given him by his victories.[1]

In Italy he excavated a tunnel under a mountain, to give a more gentle descent to the Flaminian Way, and he rebuilt at Herculaneum the temple of the Mother of the Gods, which had been thrown down by an earthquake.[2] He attempted to stop the continual encroachments of private persons on the public domain: at Rome he ordered the College of Pontiffs to make one of these inquests;[3] at Pompeii he sent a tribune to measure the localities, hear the complaints, and render to the city what pertained to it:[4] Vesuvius was soon to bring into harmony both proprietors and trespassers by taking all unto itself, even the road of tombs which leads to the enshrouded city. In the provinces he rebuilt at his own expense cities ruined by earthquakes or by fire; he constructed roads without molesting the bordering proprietors,[5] he erected useful monuments, and terminated the disputes of communities with reference to their boundaries.

Minerva, found near the Temple of Peace (Statue of the Vatican, *Mus. Pio Clem.*, pl. 9).

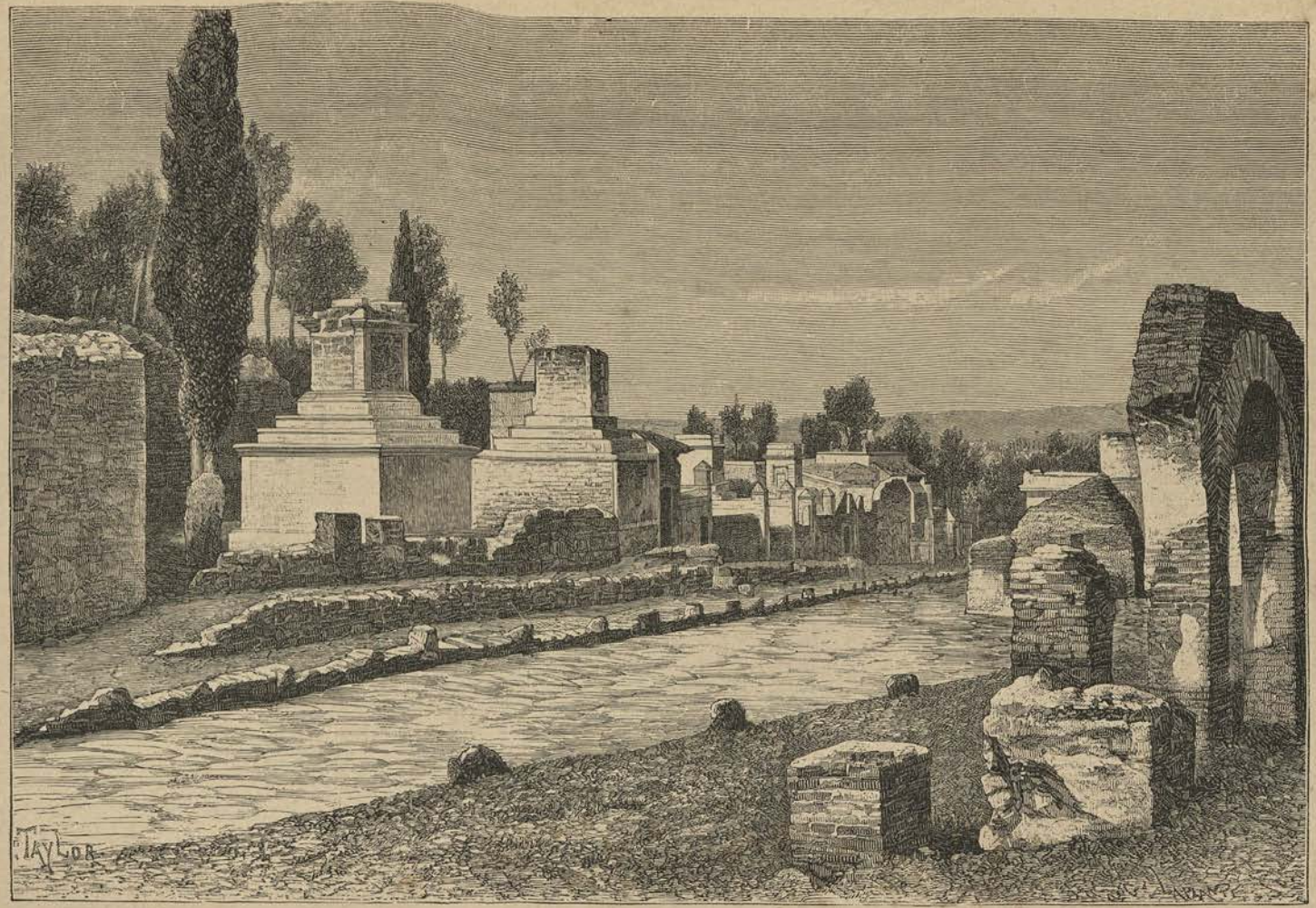
It is not, therefore, clear why Suetonius, after enumerating his expenditures, of which some were necessities and others benefactions, should have applied to him a reproach which has clung to his memory, that of a sordid and culpable avarice. According to this writer—who listens at every keyhole, and accepts from every

[1] *Auctis P. R. finibus, pomœrium ampliaverunt terminaveruntque* (*C. I. L.*, vi. No. 1,232).
[2] Orelli, No. 744, in the year 76.
[3] *Id.*, No. 3,261.
[4] *Id.*, No. 3,262.
[5] *Intactis cultoribus* (Aur. Victor, *de Cæs.*, 9; Orelli, No. 4,031).

gossip suspicious anecdotes and authentic information, official statements and witticisms, without concerning himself whether one portion of his story does not destroy some other—Vespasian sold magistracies to applicants and pardon to those under prosecution; bought up certain commodities to sell again at retail; permitted the governors to pillage, reserving the right to make them disgorge, like sponges, which he allowed to fill themselves in the provinces but which he squeezed at Rome. Such customs would have constituted a detestable government, itself organizing the squandering of its own resources. Vespasian, a soldier trained to discipline and order, certainly did not possess these, and we find no trace of them in the facts which have come down to us. The selections that we know to have been made by him are excellent: in Britain, Frontinus and Agricola, whom Tacitus treats as great men; in Asia, Silius Italicus, who, on the testimony of Pliny, gained to himself much glory there.[1] We have seen that he prepared the fortune of Trajan, that of the Antonines, and he honoured the consulate by calling to it the celebrated jurisconsult Pegasus.

Suetonius also shows us Vespasian sharing with his freedmen the profits which they derived for certain favours. One day the servant who was in charge of his litter halted, on pretext that one of the mules had cast a shoe, and a party to a law-suit was just in time to prefer a request. "How much have you gained by shoeing your mule?" he asked of the attendant, and exacted one-half of the gratuity. One of his freedmen solicited a stewardship for a pretended brother; the emperor sent for the candidate, made him count out the promised sum and gave him the place. The deputies of a town came to announce to him that a sum of money had been voted by their fellow-citizens to erect a statue to him. "Put it here," said Vespasian extending his hand, "the base is all ready." Add to this also, if desired, the surname of Six Oboli, which the Alexandrians gave him, and the parody of the buffoon at his funeral: "How much will my funeral procession cost? Ten million sesterces? Give me 100,000, and throw me into the Tiber;" and about the money from a certain tax, of

[1] Tac., *Agric.*, 17; Pliny, *Epist.*, iii. 7.



The Way of the Tombs at Pompeii.

which Vespasian said to his son who had opposed it: "Do you find that this money has a bad smell?"[1] All this is certainly lacking in dignity; but may they not be good tricks played by an old man who loved to laugh, or rather slanders, put in circulation by the fine society of Rome, by those elegant debauchees of the court of Nero, who could not be consoled as they saw this plebeian upstart counting the money of the State, which the heir of the Julii flung to them in feasts and orgies; to them, to be prodigal was "to act the Cæsar."[2] Let us leave these wretched matters and come to serious history.

We are aware that it is impossible to make out the budget of the Empire, and that, according to all probabilities, its resources were not great. Under Domitian an increase of one-third in the payments to the troops ruined the *ærarium militare*, although it was fed by the largest revenues of the State.[3] The bad princes guarded against this financial deficiency by the law of majesty, but Vespasian did not know how to "audit his accounts" after the fashion of Caligula and Nero.[4] Yet, for nearly ten years the government had done nothing for the Empire, and to the ruins caused by carelessness of power were added those which arose from internal dissensions; all public service was suffering. A multitude of creditors were presenting their claims to the treasury; many cities demanded that they should be assisted in rebuilding their temples, their walls; and the reconstruction of their Capitol alone, that is to say of their national sanctuary, must have cost enormous sums; but still more was required to repair the bridges, the highways; to erect the *castra stativa* torn down at certain

[1] This tax on urinals really existed, and many others of like character: on manure, on sewers, on courtesans, on dogs, etc. Aur. Victor (*de Cæs.*, 9) says: *Satis constat, ærarii inopia ac labe urbium novas eum, neque aliquandiu postea habitas vectigalium pensiones exquisivisse.* He afterwards enumerates the works executed by Vespasian, and adds: *Quæ tot tantaque brevi confecta, prudentiam magis quam avaritiam probavere.* He is also reproached for having taken from certain colonies lands not yet conceded, *subseciva*, to sell them for the profit of the treasury. He would have done better, as Domitian did (Suet., *Dom.*, 9), to leave the lands in dispute to the colonists, who would have ended by utilizing them; but this measure was still one of the least onerous to meet the financial exigencies of the moment.

[2] Καισαρεύειν; this is the saying of the Alexandrians against Vespasian: "He does not know how to act the Cæsar." (Dion, lxvi. 8.)

[3] Suet., *Dom.*, 12. On the *ærarium mil.* see above, vol. iv. p. 13.

[4] He did not like the law of majesty and did not apply it in its rigour. Cf. Dion, lxvi. 9; Aur. Victor, *de Cæs.*, 9; Eutropius, vii. 13; Suidas, v. Βεσπασιανός.

points by the barbarians; to establish numerous colonies of veterans, to render the legions more docile, and to lessen the expenditures for the army; to fill the arsenals emptied by the civil war, and to provide for the expenses which the military reorganization of the frontiers necessitated. We have no knowledge of the wars of Vespasian, except that three times in the year 71 he assumed the title of *imperator*, and three times again the following year. But when we see him making Cappadocia an imperial proconsular province with numerous garrisons to check the incursions which desolated it; and, towards the Danube, extending his influence over the barbarians even beyond the Borysthenes;[1] when we read in Tacitus that Velleda, the prophetess of the Bructeri, was at that time brought a captive to Rome; that Cerialis vanquished the Brigantes and Frontinus the Silures, we must believe that Vespasian made a vigorous effort along the whole line of his outposts to impress upon foreign nations respect for the Roman name, which two years of anarchy had singularly diminished. These expeditions, even when successful, were a source of expense.

Here is the secret of that severe economy which appeared to the prodigal and light-minded a shameful stinginess. Vespasian one day declared to the Conscript Fathers that 4,000,000,000 sesterces, or according to another version 40,000,000,000, were needed by him to restore everything to good condition.[2] He conducted this work of reparation with boldness, re-establishing the taxes abolished under Galba, creating new ones, and augmenting those of the provinces. It was as much for this financial reorganization of the Empire that he had himself appointed censor as for its political and moral reorganization. The register of the survey of lands, which he caused to be drawn up, aided in discovering numerous estates and persons who were freed from taxes or had not been entered upon the rolls. He had them included, and the

[1] Orelli, No. 750.

[2] A milliard of francs, if one reads *quadragies;* ten milliards, if we retain *quadringenties* (Suet., *Vesp.*, 16). See in the *Fragmenta Historicorum Græc.*, vol. iv. p. 578 (Ed. Didot), two passages from John of Antioch and Suidas very favourable to Vespasian: . . . . τὸν πλοῦτον οὐκ ἐς τὰς ἡδονάς, ἀλλ' ἐς τὰς δημοσίας χρείας ἐποιεῖτο. Aur. Victor (*de Cæs.*, 9) is very favourable to him and says, in reference to the accusation of avarice: *Uti quidam prave putant.* Eutropius (*Epit.*, vii. 13) accepts it, but adds that he never took anything from any person and that he loaded the indigent with gifts.

tribute of several provinces was found to have doubled.[1] Nero had foolishly bestowed immunities with lavish hand; Vespasian withdrew them, and created an additional profit to the treasury by forming new provinces, new taxable material. This is what he sought when he took away the franchises from eight states which had remained free, and which for the most part had made very ill use of their liberties. We comprehend all these measures. They are those of a statesman who knows how to find resources to meet necessary expenses.

He even opened a new source of permanent expenditure. Rude as he was in his manners and in his language, the son of the publican of Reate understood the influence of letters and the arts, and he protected them "by granting rich perquisites and magnificent presents to celebrated poets;[2] to famous artists—to the one, for instance, who restored the Venus of Cos, and to the statuary who repaired the Colossus. He even constituted an annual grant of 100,000 sesterces (20,000 francs) to the Latin and Greek professors of rhetoric." Quintilian, who first received it, retained it for twenty years, and was in addition honoured with the consular ornaments. It is said that this unwonted liberality[3]—which gives to the veteran soldier to-day a claim to the eulogium of the friends of letters—arose less from a lively appreciation of literature than from a desire to control it, and it was the first instance of placing intellectual affairs under the official hand of the State. Doubtless Vespasian had no such purpose, and simply followed the current of opinion. The wants of a polished society developed in the midst of a rich and tranquil empire. The Romans, who could no longer act and knew not how to think outside the round of Greek ideas, occupied their protracted leisure in making in prose and verse continual variations on familiar themes. Everybody wrote and declaimed, and as they had *prudentes* to solve legal difficulties, they desired to have masters to elucidate questions of

[1] Frontin., *de Colon., ap.* Goes., 126 and 146; Suet., *Vesp.*, 16.

[2] Suetonius doubtless alludes to the gift of 500,000 sesterces which Vespasian, on the testimony of Tacitus (*de Orat.*, 9), made to a famous poet of this time, Saleius Bassus, of whom we have no knowledge.

[3] Augustus had already treated in a like manner Verrius Flaccus, son of a freedman, the most celebrated master of his time and to whom he intrusted the education of his grandsons. (Suet., *de Illust. Gramm.*, 17.)

grammar and rhetoric. Private persons established schools, libraries, and scholarships in favour of poor young men; the cities appointed public professors, or, as we say, founded chairs of instruction.[1] The State did as the cities did.

Besides, all that hitherto had been free activity and private industry came under regulation and took its place in the great machine constructed by the emperors. Already under Nero physicians had been placed in the line of official and municipal organization, by giving a salary, immunities, and a title to the physicians of the city or quarter, *archiatri populares*, and to the physicians of the palace, *archiatri palatini*, all of whom ended by exercising a sort of authority over the rest of their profession. Vespasian did the same for letters. By giving them a position at court and in the State he obeyed that spirit of classification which had been infused into the imperial government by Augustus. Thus the administration, like the devil-fish which in the free ocean arrests and devours all that passes within its reach, was going to seize and enfold gradually that which before had enjoyed a free existence. When it shall have succeeded in this work of absorption it will have suppressed all movement, all life. The perfection of the system will be, for the Empire, rigidity and then death.

It is, however, proper to remark that a part of the men of letters determined henceforth to draw from this fount which was opened to them, and calmed down their eloquence. Others continued their declamations against "the tyrants."

In suppressing civil war and political activity the government had thrown out of employment many persons who, after the proscriptions of the triumvirs, as among us after the Terror, had deemed themselves so happy in being alive that they had for many years demanded nothing more, and gladly repeated the line of the poet:

Deus nobis hæc otia fecit.

The peaceful and admired reign of Augustus is due to this

[1] Pliny, *Epist.*, i. 8; iv. 13: . . . . *Annuos sumptus in alimenta ingenuorum . . . . multis in locis . . . . præceptores publice conducuntur.* They also enjoyed important privileges. All those *qui publice juvenibus prosunt* (*Digest*, xxvii. i. 6, § 5), philosophers, rhetoricians, grammarians, were exempt from trusteeships, from priestly offices, from municipal services, from the militia, and the obligation to act as judges in the tribunals or go on legations to the emperor. Physicians, *περιοδευταί. id est circulatores*, had the same privileges. See chap. lxxxiii. § 4.

universal lassitude quite as much as to the wisdom of the prince; but in the long run, repose wearies, admiration palls, and *ennui* tires even of happiness. Since the reign of Tiberius there had been formed in Rome an opposition party, scantily endowed with ideas and political sense, rich in that piquant wit which delights in scandal, in empty and high-sounding words, the delight of the idle in the salons and under the porticoes. It was not a party with definite plans and ready to become a government, but isolated malcontents, incapable of action, and yet quite capable, as Seneca the Elder says, of risking their heads for a witticism. By their side were the cynic and Stoic philosophers, two sects quite indifferent to politics, but which furnished to weak brains fine themes for declamation against society and the State. "These men," said Mucianus, "are filled with a foolish pride. Let your beard grow, raise your eyebrows, wrap yourself in a ragged cloak and go without shoes—that is what constitutes a wise, courageous, and just man. The rest are worthy only of contempt. The nobles are fools, lesser men are small-minded, the handsome man is impure, the rich a robber, the poor a servant."[1] Juvenal, the echo of the popular antipathy against these fiery moralists who pretend to speak their mind to the crowd as they do to a prince, is harder yet about these "hypocrites." Vespasian, by his censorship, had furnished them with recruits, in expelling from the senate and from the equestrian order persons of bad character, who afterwards concealed their rancour beneath the philosopher's cloak. Such was that Palfurius Sura who, to please Nero, had contended in the arena against a young girl from Lacedæmon, and from whom Vespasian had taken his dishonoured consular toga. This disgrace made of him a Stoic and an austere person,[2] who clamoured for liberty and popular government up to the moment when, taken into favour again by Domitian, he became the most greedy of the delators, and then laboured, as jurisconsult, to establish the theory of the absolute rights of the emperor. In the time of those princes who easily pronounced sentence of death, these men had said nothing, wrapped in their silence; a sad and resigned attitude had then been sufficient for their dignity; under the free and easy

[1] *Excerpta Vat., apud* Dion, lxvi. 12.

[2] Juvenal, *Schol. ad Sat.*, iv. 53.

Vespasian they spoke, accused, and inveighed. At first the emperor paid no attention to these clamours; their virtue became indignant at this indifference, and as they incurred the risk of being forgotten they invited persecution, thinking that this would give them glory without martyrdom. Some even, intoxicated with pride and insolence at the imperturbable coolness of the prince, proceeded to brave every peril to obtain satisfaction for this harmful tranquillity. At last an old law of the Republic, which expelled strangers from the city, was invoked against them.[1] One of them who had been condemned to banishment because he publicly taught that the government of one was the worst government, was informed of the sentence in the midst of a harangue which he was at that moment making against monarchy; he continued his speech. Another, likewise punished by exile, sees the emperor coming. Instead of rising, or at least saluting the head of the Roman world, he insults him. Vespasian contented himself with saying: "You are doing your best to make me take away your life, but I do not kill a yelping cur." A third, Diogenes, constituting himself censor of the morals of the palace, openly inveighed against Titus in the theatre on account of his *liaison* with Queen Berenice; he was sentenced to be beaten with rods. Heras, his companion, at once recommenced, adding a mass of insults against the people; they cut off his head.[2]

These reformers, who go to the theatre to rail at the prince and the people, were ridiculous. Yet these public attacks upon the morals and ideas of the time are a grave symptom. At the same epoch other men also broke with the Roman society and its beliefs. The philosophic and religious reaction against a sensual paganism aroused apostles, and even martyrs, and the world entered upon a wholly new path, to be filled with dramatic incidents and generous sacrifices, but also where social ties will relax and the love for an earthly country grow feeble even to extinction.

Vespasian put an end to these agitations by renewing against the Stoics and the cynics the senatus-consulta of the Republic,

[1] *Lex Junia de Peregrinis*, of the year 126 B.C.

[2] It is not known who this Heras was. Dion contents himself with saying (lxvi. 15): "Certain cynic philosophers having secretly entered (*παραδύντες*) Rome, went to the theatre and insulted the people." Perhaps this took place after the decree of banishment, which would explain the death of Heras.

which had debarred philosophers from residing at Rome. He made an exception for Musonius, the Roman knight previously proscribed by Nero, who seems to have followed the sect only in its good qualities. He would gladly have spared Helvidius also, the son-in-law of Thrasea and a man as honest as his father-in-law, but who was inopportunely republican, and who thought liberty consisted in insulting power. What Demetrius and Diogenes did in the street Helvidius did at the senate-house and tribunal; he conspired in high office and at the heart of the government. During his prefecture he never mentioned Vespasian in his edicts, and when the prince returned to Rome he had saluted him by his family name, as if the emperor was in his eyes merely a private citizen. In the senate he argued vehemently against him; in the Forum, in the groups there assembled, his words were always eulogistic of popular government, and he never failed to celebrate by a festival the birthdays of Brutus and Cassius. It would have been difficult not to find this conduct seditious;[1] and as Helvidius was a senator, impunity would have been one of those indications of weakness which are shown by governments when approaching dissolution. Vespasian, urged by Mucianus, suffered him to be banished, and, some time afterwards, on the renewal of complaints, sent an order to put him to death. This order he immediately after wished to withdraw, but they deceived him by telling him it was too late. Did Helvidius take part in one of those numerous conspiracies spoken of by Suetonius?[2] We cannot answer, for we have knowledge of only one, that of Marcellus, a person of consular rank, and Cæcina, the old general under Vitellius. The latter had already won over a number of soldiers, when, on the eve of carrying it into effect, Titus, who had just seized a proclamation written by Cæcina's own hand, invited the general to a banquet, where he caused him to be assassinated—a just execution, doubtless, but very expeditious, and by its form worthy of the

[1] Juvenal, *Sat.*, v. 37. This is Dion's opinion, lxvi. 12.

[2] *Assiduas in se conjurationes* (*Vesp.*, 25). Aur. Victor (*de Cæs.*) says the same thing: *conjurationum multas.* The words do not contradict what we said on page 649. The happy effects to be produced by the renewal of the aristocratic body could not make themselves felt at once, and the ancient nobles retained among the knights and in the senate, or expelled from the two orders, preserved their character as malcontents and their habits of conspiracy.

worst days. Marcellus, condemned by the senate, cut his own throat.[1]

No emperor since Tiberius bestowed so much attention on the affairs of allied or subject nations as Vespasian. He revived the system of colonies and worked it on a large scale, in order to increase the Roman element in the provinces. We may recognize in the name *Flavian*, borne by many cities, the towns to which he and his sons, but he especially, sent out veterans, and we certainly do not know all of them.[2] We have seen him everywhere undertaking useful public works, and enrolling the prominent persons of the provinces in the senate and in the equestrian order. During his sojourn in Egypt he had made strict reforms in that country, which had drawn upon him the ridicule of the turbulent Alexandrians. In Judæa he thought he had stifled a volcano, which, before it is extinguished, will yet shake the entire East. The Jews who had escaped the slaughter had fled in two directions: along the borders of the Tigris, whither they carried their impotent hatred, and into Africa, where 1,000,000 of their co-religionists had long before preceded them. On finding themselves so numerous there they wished to renew the war which had just closed with the ruin of Jerusalem. For a moment they succeeded in creating a disturbance at Alexandria, where they pulled down the statues of the emperor; but, betrayed by their brethren at Cyrene, at Thebes, and throughout all Egypt, they perished in the midst of tortures, and Vespasian shut up the temple which the high-priest Onias had built in the vicinity of Heliopolis.[3] A few Greeks who had been drawn into these disturbances were spared; a sedition which broke out later at Antioch was punished with no greater severity: Vespasian paid little heed to these paroxysms of municipal turbulence in the populace of the large Greek cities, provided the general good order was not compromised.

He was more severe towards a prince of that vicinity. Antiochus, king of Commagene, had fought for Otho at Bedriacum

[1] This Marcellus, a man of obscure birth, was a sad fellow. Nero gave him 5,000,000 sesterces as a recompense for having procured the condemnation of Thrasea.

[2] Icosium, which was colonized by Vespasian, does not bear the added name of Flavian city (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, v. 1). He seems also to have established veterans at Reate (Orelli, No. 3,685).

[3] Josephus, *Bell. Jud.*, vii. 10, 37.

and for Titus under the walls of Jerusalem; but, suspected of being in communication with the Parthians, he was dispossessed, and Vespasian reduced his kingdom to the rank of a province. Tiberius had already once placed under the direction of the Empire this important point of the oriental frontier. The destiny of this

Antioch, on the Orontes (Statue also called the Genius of Antioch).[1]

royal family marks the improvement in morals which we shall have occasion to notice later. Formerly captive kings were put to death and their children reduced to an abject condition; a son of this Antiochus received the ornaments of the prefecture, then rose to the consulate and was admitted to the high priesthood of the Fratres Arvales.[2] By joining Cappadocia to Galatia to form one

[1] Vatican, *Musée Pio-Clem.*, iii. pl. 46.

[2] *C. I. L.*, vol. iii. No. 552. It is by Trajan that he was *allectus inter prætorios*.

imperial consular province,[1] re-uniting Pontus to the senatorial province of Bithynia, but placing it under the supervision of a prefect of the Pontic coast,[2] and by the colonies of Sinope, Samosata, Neapolis, Emmaus, he fortified this line of oriental frontiers, which in an extent of 200 leagues everywhere bordered on the barbarians. So the peace was not disturbed during all this reign, and when Vologeses, irritated because he had not been assisted against the Alani, wrote to the emperor with disdain and reproach, a few preparations, or, as an ancient writer says, the mere apprehension of war, checked the barbarians.

Vespasian everywhere drew closer the bonds of the Empire, which Nero had so greatly relaxed. He withdrew from the Lycians the liberty which the successor of Claudius had doubtless restored to them, and re-united them to Pamphylia. Greece also lost the independence which her fawning flatteries had won her, and Rhodes became the capital of the new province of the Isles. But he always respected the concession of city rights made by his predecessors, since they tended to the end which he dimly saw to be necessary, the fusion of nations and the unity of the Empire. Thrace, that other barrier of the Roman world, was, since the time of Claudius, territory of the Empire and placed under the authority of the governor of Mœsia. In order that this officer might not be diverted from the rigorous supervision which he ought to exercise along the Danube, Vespasian formed, at the expense of Bithynia and Asia, a new province called the Hellespont, to which he attached Thrace; Byzantium, on this occasion, lost its liberty.

This manipulation of the provinces would indicate another scheme, that of dividing the governments, now of too much importance, which Augustus had gladly established in the East, to concentrate the forces and better insure resistance to the Parthians. Vespasian, who had proven in his own case how greatly these extensive commands favoured the projects of the ambitious, made a separate government of Palestine, and further diminished the importance and forces of the proconsul of Syria by constituting Commagene

[1] Borghesi, *Œuvres*, vol. v. p. 348.

[2] Pliny, *Epist.*, x. 18, 32. According to an inscription of the year 75 found in the suburbs of Tiflis, Vespasian aided the king of the Iberians to fortify his capital against the Parthians. (*Journal asiatique*, vol. ix. p. 93.)

and Cappadocia military provinces, as we have just seen. The same idea doubtless induced him to separate Thrace from Mœsia.

We know nothing about the borders of the Rhine and of the Danube. As to them, we must conclude that the firm discipline re-established by Vespasian maintained peace. We only see that Mœsia has so well cleared its valleys which but lately were in a wild state that she is in a position to send great quantities of grain to Rome.[1] This fact speaks much for the power of colonization which this Roman race possessed. Vespasian doubtless profited by one of the lessons which the civil war had taught, when he established in front of the Julian Alps a colony at *Flavium Solvense*, on the same road which Antonius Primus had followed, so that another would have less facility in crossing this barrier of Italy. Helvetia had suffered much during the Vitellian war; he furnished aid, for his name is found in several inscriptions of this country, unfortunately too defaced to furnish us any useful hints.[2] One of them reminds us that a triumphal arch had been erected in honour of his son Titus, near *Vindonissa* (Windisch), by the country inhabitants, *vicani*.[3] In Gaul a rigorous search had been made for the fomentors of the last insurrection; we have seen that one of the principal chiefs, Sabinus, discovered after the lapse of nine years, was conducted to Rome and executed—an act of cruelty which is a stain on the life of Vespasian, unless he had some imperious reason for not showing this time his wonted clemency.

Galba had given the *jus Latii* to the greater part of Gaul; Vespasian extended it to the whole of Spain. As Italy was becoming enfeebled it was prudence and justice to interest the most Roman provinces in the Empire. A short time before a Gaul, Vindex, overthrew Nero, and another, Antonius Primus, opened Rome to Vespasian. In twenty years will begin the Hispano-Gallic dynasty of those who are styled the Antonines.

The affairs of Britain are better known to us, thanks to Tacitus, whom we find here with his *Life of Agricola*. Three

[1] *Magno tritici modo annonam P. R. adlevarit* (Orelli, No. 750). Another inscription, of the time of Marcus Aurelius (*C. I. L.*, vol. iii. No. 753), gives to the great town of Sirmium the surname of Colonia Flavia Sirmatium; one of the three Flavians had, therefore, established a colony there.

[2] Mommsen, *Inscr. Helv.*, 18, 168, 249.

[3] *Id.*, 245, in the year 79.

skilful generals were in command there under Vespasian: Cerialis, who reduced the Brigantes to submission; Julius Frontinus, the author of the book of *Stratagems*, who brought the Silurii into subjection; Agricola, whose administration belongs to the history of the following reigns. Vespasian, skilful in choosing men, which is an especially royal quality, also knew how to stimulate devotion by honouring merit. He one day delivered in the crowded senate a brilliant eulogium of that skilful governor of Mœsia of whom we have already spoken, and he allowed his words to be engraved on a marble slab which we still possess, with the enumeration of all the services which Plautius had rendered to the State.[1]

Vespasian was near the end of his laborious career. He was sixty-nine years old, and was at his little house in the territory of Reate when he felt the approach of death. "I feel that I am becoming a god," he said to those around him, laughing in advance at his apotheosis. He no longer had any respect for omens, at least not at this moment. He was told of the appearance of a comet as if it were an infallible augury: "That concerns the king of the Parthians, who is long-haired [*comatus*]," said he, "and not me who am bald;"[2] the words of a superstitious man who ended as a sceptic. Up to his last moment manly thoughts occupied his mind; he received deputations, gave orders, provided for all his affairs, and, feeling the approach of dissolution, "an emperor," he said, "ought to die standing." He attempted to rise and expired in this effort on the 23rd of June, 79.

The first plebeian emperor has had no historian, but a few words of his biographer suffice for his renown: *rem publicam stabilivit et ornavit*, "by him the State was strengthened and glorified." Pliny says also: "Greatness and majesty produced in him no other effect than to render his power of doing good equal to his desire." We may add that this soldier who was made emperor by the legions was wiser than Trajan, who was more highly extolled: he demanded everything from peace, nothing from war.

[1] Orelli, No. 750.
[2] Dion, lxvi. 17.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

TITUS AND DOMITIAN (79-96 A.D.).

I.—Titus (79–81).

VESPASIAN being dead, Titus[1] assumed the title of Augustus. Brought up at the court of Nero among the young companions of Britannicus, he was present near his friend, and perhaps tasted the poison.[2] He served with distinction as tribune in Germany and in Britain, and we have seen that he terminated the war in Judæa. The soldiers counted him among the bravest, the chiefs esteemed him the most skilful, and his agreeable manners made him a host of friends. Yet the fondness which he showed for banquets and spectacles, his severity in the administration of the prefecture of the prætorium, and the murder of Cæcina awakened anxiety. But he had profited by the lessons of his father. The government of 80,000,000 of men appeared to him a matter serious enough to require that he should attend only to public affairs. His father had prepared him for this by taking him as associate in the Empire;[3] he had given to him the title of Cæsar, the censorship, the tribunitian power, the prefecture of the prætorium, and seven consulates. Coming into power at the age of maturity, rich in experience and satiated with pleasures by his very excesses, he had henceforth but one passion, that of the public welfare. At the outset he dismissed his boon companions; in his father's lifetime he had already sacrificed to Roman prejudices his tender sentiments for the Jewish queen Berenice, whom he had sent back

[1] Titus Flavius Vespasianus, born at Rome on the 30th of December, 41, the year of the birth of Agricola (Suet., *Tit.*, 2). He was accordingly thirty-eight and a half years old when he came to the throne.

[2] It was so thought, says Suetonius, and he was long and dangerously ill (*Tit.*, 2).

[3] *Participem atque etiam tutorem imperii agere* (Suet. *Tit.*, 6). He bore, even in the lifetime of Vespasian, the title of *imperator* (Orelli, No. 751), not as a first name, as did the reigning prince, but because he had triumphed with his father.

to the East.[1] In taking possession of the supreme pontificate he declared that he would keep his hands pure from blood, and he

Titus (Bust of the Gallery of the Uffizi).

kept his word: no one under his reign perished by his orders. Two young patricians had been condemned to death for conspiring

[1] She was the daughter of Agrippa, the last king of the Jews, sister of young Agrippa, the king of Ituria, and widow of her uncle Herod, king of Chalcis, and of Polemon, king of Cilicia. She was thirteen years older than Titus, and consequently fifty-two years old at the death of

against his person; he pardoned them, made them sit by his side at the games of the circus, and handed them the swords of the gladiators which were presented to him: a mark of confidence attended with slight danger perhaps, but one which was greatly applauded. Vespasian, menaced by continual plots, had treated with consideration certain remains of the ancient tyranny, the delators and suborners of witnesses, without employing their services; Titus had them beaten with rods, sold, or transported. He ruined delation even, when he refused to receive accusations of high treason, when he forbade entering complaint of an act under several laws, and when he accorded the right of prescription to the dead, by prohibiting attacks upon their memory after the expiration of a certain limit which he fixed.

Clemency, under the features of Julia, daughter of Titus.[1]

It was to be feared that this kindness might degenerate into weakness. Thus Tiberius had wisely enacted that favours conferred by one prince, unless individually confirmed by his successor, should become void. Titus recognized by a single act the validity of all prior concessions.[2] This was

Vespasian. But it is probable that she left Rome five years earlier. She returned there at the accession of Titus, but without changing the resolution of the prince. Cf. Josephus, *Ant. Jud.*, xviii. 7; xx. 5, etc.; Suet. *Tit.*, 7; Dion, lxvi. 15, 18.

[1] Statue of the Vatican, Braccio Nuovo, No. 56.

[2] *Quum ex instituto Tiberii omnes dehinc Cæsares beneficia a superioribus concessa principibus aliter rata non haberent, quam si eadem iisdem et ipsi dedissent, primus præterita omnia*

more monarchical, since the imperial will seemed then one and immutable, despite the diversity of princes; but it was depriving himself of a useful control and giving the rein to an avidity which no fear of the future now held in check. Accordingly applicants crowded forward; no one was repulsed; and when his counsellors became alarmed at these gifts, which were impoverishing

Portion of the Arena of the Coliseum.

the treasury, and at so many promises which he could not fulfil: "No one," said he, "ought to go away downcast from the presence of his prince." To the people, who solicited neither promotion nor office, he gave, at the dedication of the Coliseum, magnificent games which lasted a hundred days, a naval fight, gladiators, and 5,000 wild beasts. From a stage erected in the theatre he scattered among the crowd wooden balls, each containing an order for provisions or clothing, for vases of gold or silver, for

uno confirmavit edicto (Suet., *Tit.*, 8). Our kings, in the Middle Ages, made the principle of Tiberius a rule of law for the royal domain.

slaves, equipages, and entire flocks. He built new warm baths, to which he admitted the public while he was himself bathing in

A Corridor of the Coliseum.

them; and, in order that they might recover, in the festivities, at least, their lost sovereignty, he showed them great deference, joked with those present at the theatre, declaring that all should

proceed according to the wishes of the assembly and not his own; that the spectators had only to ask for what they desired to obtain it immediately. A greatly overrated saying illustrates this good-natured easy temper: "Oh, my friends!" he sighed, one evening when he had not made any gift since morning; "Oh, my friends, I have lost my day!"

The duties of an emperor are more austere, and popularity thus won at the expense of the State's resources is not the best; but that which Titus gained was of course immense after the

Remains of the Baths of Titus.

harsh administration of Vespasian. Let us hasten to state that communities suffering under any calamity found him as prompt to alleviate their miseries as the courtiers to satisfy their desires. An eruption of Vesuvius overwhelmed Herculaneum, Pompeii, and Stabiæ; pestilence carried off thousands of people even in Rome; and at last a conflagration, which raged three days, consumed once more the Capitol, the library of Augustus, and Pompey's theatre. To Campania Titus sent men of consular rank with large sums of money, and he devoted to the relief of the survivors the property that had fallen to the treasury through the death of those who had perished in the disaster without leaving heirs. At Rome he

Titus (Statue in the Vatican, Braccio Nuovo, No. 26, found near the Church of S. John Lateran, 1828).

took upon himself the work of repairing everything, and to provide the requisite funds he sold the furniture of the imperial palace. This lavish expenditure, which was in some instances necessary, might possibly reduce Domitian to financial straits, and we shall see how Domitian escaped the difficulty.

This reign lasted only twenty-six months, from the 23rd of June, A.D. 79, to the 13th of September, A.D. 81. As Titus was about to visit his paternal estate in the Sabine territory he was seized by a violent fever, which soon left no hope of his recovery. There is a report that he partly opened the curtains of his litter and gazed at the sky with eyes full of tears and reproaches. "Why," he exclaimed, "must I die so soon? In all my life I have, however, but one thing to repent." What was this? No one knows. Let us not investigate,[1] nor state on the other hand that the shortness of this reign did not leave time for his love of the public good to expire, for popular praise to grow faint, and for obstacles to rise in his path.[3] Good name among emperors is too rare for us to refuse Titus the appellation bestowed on him by his contemporaries: the *Delight of the human race.*

Apotheosis of Titus.[2]

Some writers have alluded to poison which Domitian was reputed to have given him; but Suetonius, who is so prone to accept sinister rumours, does not believe this, and the physicians of Titus told Plutarch that this prince was killed by the injudicious use of warm baths. The Jews had much fuller information about this premature death, and the *Talmud* still relates that as Titus was returning to Italy with the sacred vessels which he had taken

[1] Was it the murder of Cæcina without form of trial?

[2] From a bas-relief on the triumphal arch of this prince.

[3] This is the opinion of Dion, Zonaras, Ausonius, etc. *Felix brevitate regni.* Julian, *les Césars*, 7, reproaches him with lax morals.

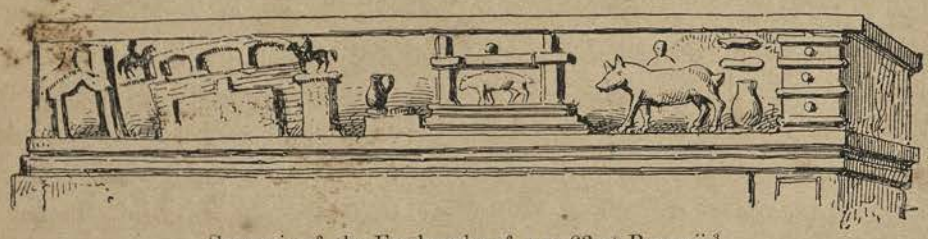
from the temple of Jehovah he was assailed by a furious tempest. "The god of the Jews," he exclaimed, "has power then only on the sea where he has already overwhelmed Pharaoh. If he is really God, let him fight with me on land." At these words a voice replied: "Wretch, thou child of a wretch, I have created an infinitely little creature; and it shall fight for me." The instant Titus had touched the shore of Italy a gnat crept into his nostrils and lodged in his brain, which it gnawed for seven years. One day the prince was passing by a blacksmith's forge and the noise of the hammer on the anvil stopped the insect and the excruciating torture. Titus thereupon gave four pieces of silver daily to a man who kept close to him and struck incessantly on an anvil. For a month the plan succeeded; but at the expiration of this time the insect became accustomed to the noise and resumed its ravages. When Titus was dead his head was opened, and a gnat was found as large as a swallow, armed with claws of iron and a brazen beak. With this anecdote, which they related to their children, the Jews pursued with their implacable hate the memory of the destroyer of Jerusalem.

The occasion for joining the history of the earth to that of man is rarely afforded, because changes in the outline of the globe, although great with reference to the whole of a geological epoch, take place in an imperceptible manner. For the time of Titus, however, the record of a sudden and terrible shock has been preserved: the eruption of Vesuvius after a repose of perhaps 2,000 years, and the destruction of several Campanian cities.

The ancients had perfectly realized the volcanic nature of this mountain; but none of those who have preserved for us the most remote traditions knew that it had poured forth fire. At the first century of our era there remained only one half of the original crater, which can still be recognized, the *Somma;* the other half, fronting the sea, had fallen in and the place of the actual crater was occupied by a broad plateau, whose sides were covered with vines, while its summit was full of bushes, the haunts of wild boars. To form an idea of the region as it then was we must suppress the cone of black cinders over 1,300 feet high, which rises above the old plateau and from which the traveller has an incomparable view of Naples, its bay, its islands, and the cities

that lie close together along those enchanted shores, while beneath his feet the mouth of the volcano is filled with threatening noises, smoke, and with sulphurous vapours, which leave here and there on the stones that have fallen on its rim brilliant tints of red, yellow, orange, and violet, as if to place upon the brow of the sombre mountain the remains of a shattered diadem.

An earthquake, which, on the 5th of February, A.D. 63, shook Campania and overthrew almost the entire city of Pompeii,[1] proclaimed that the subterranean fires were resuming their activity. Calm, however, returned and lasted sixteen years,[2] until the middle of summer, 79 A.D. Then the ground began to heave again; wells



Souvenir of the Earthquake of A.D. 63 at Pompeii.[3]

and springs dried up, the sea boiled, and dull rumblings were heard. Finally, on the 23rd of August, an immense cloud, resembling a gigantic pine, whose top rose nearly 10,000 feet high, appeared above Vesuvius, dark, and spreading night around it, but constantly rent by lightning. Pliny the naturalist, who was in command of the fleet at Misenum, was astonished by this strange phenomenon, and wished with scientific curiosity to study it near at hand. He had the galleys fitted out to take on board the marines stationed at Resina, and the dwellers on the coast, who were wild with terror. But a shoal had suddenly been formed,

[1] Sen., *Quæst. nat.*, vi. 1. Herculaneum was likewise partially destroyed. Nuceria, and even Naples, suffered from the shock.

[2] According to an inscription A.D. 76, Herculaneum was again disturbed by an earthquake in that year, unless Vespasian had restored in A.D. 76 the ruins made in A.D. 63, which is scarcely probable.

[3] Frieze of a family altar discovered at Pompeii in 1875 in the house of the banker L. C. Jucundus, upon which is represented in relief the earthquake of A.D. 63. Here are the columns of the temple of Jupiter in a leaning position, and at the sides equestrian statues on the point of falling; at the right, a bull is being led, as an expiatory victim, to the altar of the Pompeian Venus. Troubled about the future, the banker had sought to spare his house the return of a like calamity by sacrifices to the tutelary deity of the city. (E. Pressuhn, *Pompéi, les dernières fouilles de* 1874 *à* 1878.)

and he could not reach the shore, where the waves were breaking with fury, while cinders and stones rained down upon the vessels. The position was becoming dangerous and of no use to any one, and he therefore moved a little further on and landed at Stabiæ. There he beheld Vesuvius wrapped in flames, the lava rushing from the new crater which it had just opened and flowing down the lateral fissures, the combustible gases which burst into flames as they came in contact with the air, and last of all the cloud that continually hung over the mountain, and, in the midst of the darkness which shrouded the whole country, reflected the tremendous conflagration. Pliny observed all these phenomena tranquilly, took notes and dictated. Towards evening he retired to rest and slept soundly. But the court of the house became filled with cinders, and the very house threatened to sink in. His attendants roused him and he hurried out, after covering his head with a pillow on account of the falling stones. The party assembled on the shore, but the sea was very rough and no one could embark. Pliny, who was very stout and utterly exhausted by his hard walk, lay down at full length on the ground. At this moment flames seemed to draw near, preceded by a sulphurous smell. He arose once with the assistance of two slaves, but too late, and fell back again, doubtless suffocated by the carbonic acid which is freely disengaged in volcanic eruptions, and being heavier than air remains on the surface of the ground, where Pliny had inhaled it when he lay down.[1] He was only fifty-six years old.

While Pliny was dying at Stabiæ, Pompeii, a small mercantile city of 12,000 inhabitants, built near the mouth of the Sarno upon an old overflow of lava, was buried under sixteen feet of pumice stone and cinders; Herculaneum, under sixty or eighty feet of liquid mud,[2] which has been solidified by time, and to-day supports the two cities of Portici and Resina. Upon a *tessera* or theatre

[1] All this, except the conclusion, of course, is taken from a letter of the younger Pliny, the adopted son of his uncle. A second letter, describing his mother's flight and his own, completes his interesting narrative.

[2] M. Fouqué has calculated that in 1865 Ætna sent forth so much watery vapour that this vapour, after cooling in the upper regions of the atmosphere and descending in the form of rain upon the mountain, covered it with about 28,000 cubic yards of water. A similar fact occurs in all eruptions. In A.D. 79 this torrent fell upon Herculaneum, carrying with it enormous masses of cinders, which filled up the streets, covered the houses, and rose from 30 to 40 feet above the highest buildings.

token found at Pompeii were marked the place where its possessor was to sit and the title of a comedy of Plautus, *Casina*, which was perhaps given the evening before the city perished.

Two-fifths of Pompeii are now cleared, and the visitor has the

Street in Pompeii.[1]

strange spectacle of a Roman city coming to light after eighteen centuries: a small city to be sure, with small houses, narrow streets, monuments devoid of grandeur, art without splendour though not without grace, and yet all this produces a profound impression.[2]

[1] We give a chromo-lithographic impression of the fresco of Orpheus discovered in 1874 at Pompeii, not on account of its value as a work of art, but because the early Christians adopted the myth of Orpheus to represent Christ subduing fiery passions, and because they reproduced it on their tombs.

[2] The greater part of the inhabitants of Pompeii succeeded in escaping with their riches, or returned to seek them by entering through the upper stories (houses with three stories were rare). Still, a certain number perished. Some 500 or 600 skeletons have already been found, although half of the city has not yet been searched. Cf. *Descrizione di Pompei*, by M. Fiorelli, who is so skilfully superintending the excavations. Not a single manuscript has

"If we wish," says M. Boissier, "to appreciate the fine houses of Pompeii as we ought, and to account for the attractions which they must have had for their owners, we must renounce certain prejudices. The inhabitants of this charming city seem

Remains of the Temple of Venus at Pompeii.

engrossed in seeking first of all their comfort, but they did not find it where we do. Every age, in this respect, has its own opinions and preferences, and there is a fashion in being happy as in everything else. If we allowed ourselves to be too much swayed by this tyranny of custom, which does not permit us to

been discovered at Pompeii except, in 1875, the account books of the banker Jucundus; but a bookseller's shop was found, though empty. Herculaneum, on the contrary, has already furnished 1,756, of which about 500 have been unrolled and read. Unfortunately they possess little interest. [They belong to the library of an Epicurean philosopher, and will certainly give us much important information, as they have already done, on that system. But who can tell that the philosopher did not possess a copy of Sappho or Menander among his serious books? The unrolled portions are printed in the *Volumina Heracleensia*, in course of publication for many years at Naples.—*Ed.*] With regard to Pompeii, see the curious volume published by the royal government for the eighteenth centenary of the eruption, and Boissier, *Promenades archéologiques*, pp. 287-378.

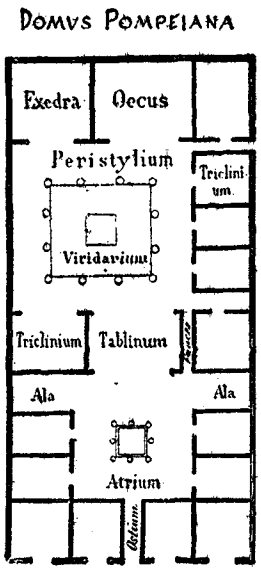
SELLIER PINX.

PERCY. chromolith.

ORPHEUS CHARMING THE ANIMALS

Fresco at Pompeii

think it possible to live otherwise than we live, the houses of Pompeii might perhaps seem to us small and inconvenient. But if we forget a moment our ideas and usages, if we try to become Romans in thought, we shall find that their inmates had admirably constructed them for their own use and that they were perfectly suited to all their tastes and needs. It is a difficult matter to-day in our large cities, even for the rich, to possess a separate mansion for themselves. Most of them take lodgings in houses which they share with many other persons. Their apartments are made up of a series of capacious, well-ventilated rooms, with large windows through which air and light are admitted from streets and squares. There is nothing similar to this in Pompeii, where the number of houses occupied by a single family is very considerable. The principal rooms are all on the ground floor.[1] The richest inhabitants built themselves houses situated on four streets, thus occupying the whole block. If they were economical they cut off from this vast plot of ground some strips which they let for a good sum. Sometimes these shops occupy the whole exterior of the mansion. While with us the *façade* of the house is carefully reserved for the finest apartments, in Pompeii it was given up to trade or else closed with thick walls in which there were no openings. The whole house, instead of looking towards the street, faces the interior. It only communicated with the outer world by the regular entrance door that was strictly closed and guarded; there were few windows, and these only in the upper stories. Families wished to live in private, far from the indifferent and from strangers. To-day what we call

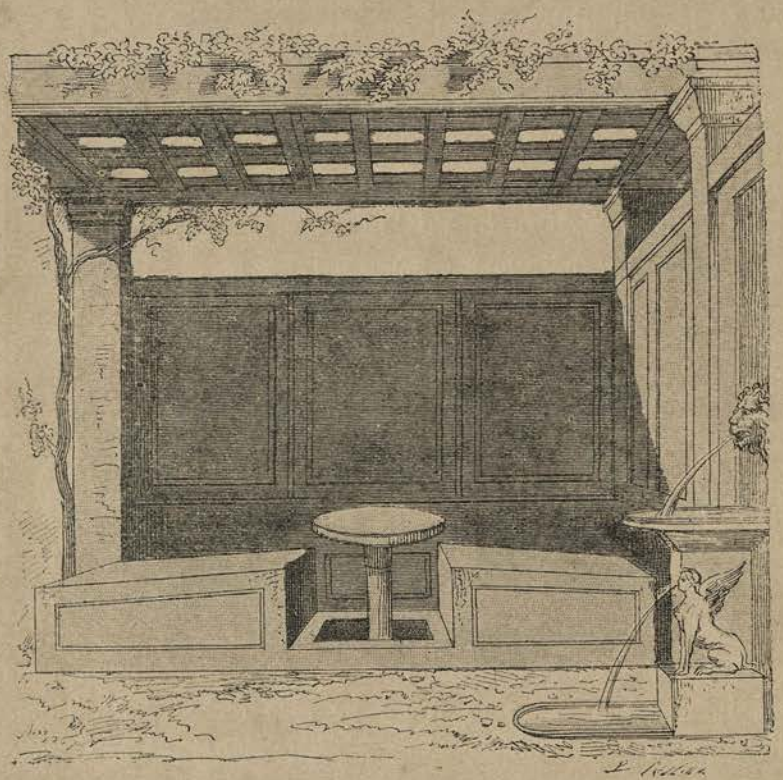


Plan of Pompeian House.[2]

[1] The upper stories must have been reserved for the least important rooms. They are reached by steep and narrow flights of steps. There is nothing resembling the grand staircase of modern houses, which leads to all the stories at once and is common to all the apartments. In Nissen's writings (*Pompeian Stud.*, p. 602) will be found some very ingenious remarks about the part which this staircase plays in our dwellings and the character it has given them. Of all parts of the modern house it is what a Pompeian would least have understood.

[2] According to Steecher, *Les plus belles murailles de Pompéi*, cahier iii. pl. 1.

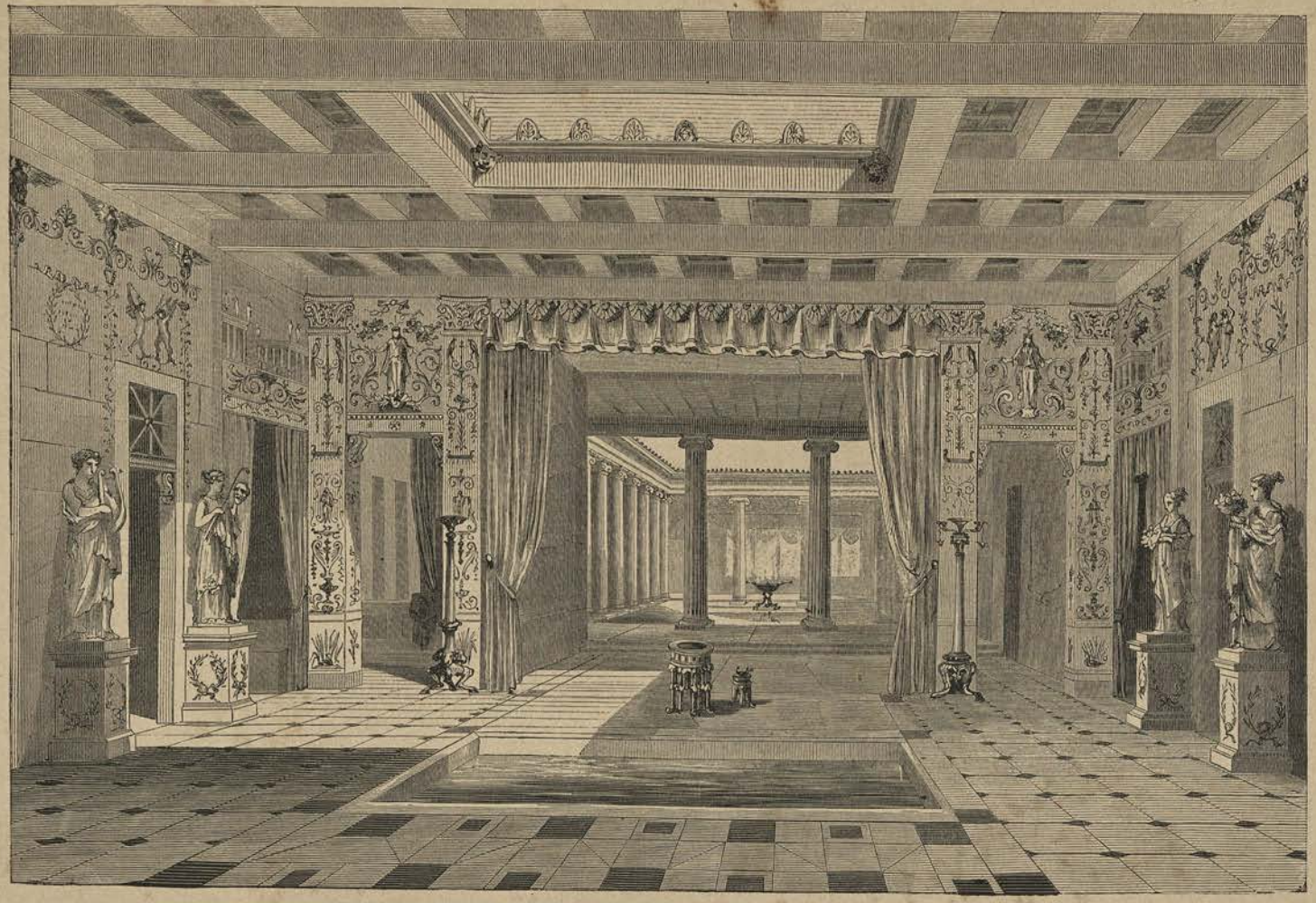
home life belongs largely to the public. People enter our houses with ease, and when they do not come we wish at least to see them through our spacious windows. With the ancients private life was more really secluded than with us. The head of the house did not care to look into the streets, and he was specially averse to having persons gaze into his abode from the street. Even within his house he had divisions and distinctions. The part



Grove or Pavilion of the House called Actæon's, at Pompeii.

where he welcomed strangers was not that to which he retired with his family, and one could not easily penetrate into this sanctuary, which was separated from every other part by corridors, closed by doors or hangings, and guarded by porters. The owner received when he wished, he remained in seclusion when so inclined; and in case any client, more troublesome and obstinate than usual, lingered in the vestibule to meet him on his way out, he had a back door (*posticum*) on a narrow street, which permitted him to escape.

"Those who find the rooms of the Pompeian houses rather too



The Interior of Pansa's House at Pompeii, restored.

narrow to suit them have already been answered that the inmates

Tablets containing Receipts, found at Pompeii in 1875.[1]

spent a large part of their days away from home, under the

[1] On the 3rd of July, 1875, there were discovered in the house of L. C. Jucundus several

porticoes of the Forum or the theatres. We must add that if the rooms are not large, they are numerous. The Roman used his residence as he did his slaves; he had different rooms for each event of the day as he had servants for every necessity of life. Each room in his house is made precisely for the use to which it is destined. He is not satisfied, as we are, with a single dining-room; but he has several of different sizes, and he changes them according to the season and the number of friends whom he desires to entertain. The chamber where he takes his siesta during the day, and that to which he retires for sleep at night, are very small; they only admit light and air through the door, which is not a disadvantage in the south, where coolness is promoted by darkness. Besides, he only remains there while he is sleeping. For the rest of the time he has a court that is closed, or nearly closed, called *atrium*, and an open court or *peristylium*.

"Here he prefers to stay when he is at home. He finds himself not only with his wife and children, but under the eyes of his servants and sometimes in their society. In spite of his fancy for seclusion and isolation, of which I have spoken, he does not shun their company, for the family of antiquity is more extended than ours. It embraces, to a lower degree, the slave and the freedman, so that the master, while living with them, always considers himself with his own household. These open and closed courts, where the family passes its life, are found in all Pompeian houses without exception; they are indispensable to furnish light for the rest of the dwelling. Consequently all persons, even the poorer classes, took pleasure in ornamenting them tastefully and sometimes with profusion. If the extent of ground permitted it, various shrubs were planted, a few flowers were made to grow. Moralists[1] and people of the world sneered at these miniature gardens between four walls; but it was very easy for them to talk thus, while they possessed magnificent villas with great trees and with vine-arbours hanging

hundred little wooden tablets, which had been deposited in a wooden chest that was partly recovered, and which are entirely carbonized. They were originally tied in twos or threes by means of strings passing through two holes. The two exterior faces are joined; the interior surfaces, slightly hollowed and protected from rubbing by a border, were covered with wax, on which letters were cut with a sharp instrument. Most of these tablets refer to auctions which Jucundus held as broker, and contain receipts made to the banker. (Pressuhn, *op. cit. Maison de L. Juc.*, pl. viii., Nos. 4 and 5.)

[1] See what Fabianus says on this subject (Sen., *Controv.*, ii., pref.).

from elegant columns. Every one does as well as he can, and I confess that I could not be harsh to these poor creatures who were so determined to place a little verdure before their eyes. I am more vexed with them on account of their love for those little streamlets which they pompously styled *euripes*, for the grottoes of rock or shell which are simply pretentious baubles. Their excuse is the fact that this uncouth taste has been shared by the middle classes of all countries and in all ages. Those in Pompeii, at least, far surpassed others through the precautions which they took to keep their eyes from any unpleasant object. They possessed beautiful mosaics, brilliant stuccoes, incrustations of marble on which their eyes loved to rest. The dazzling brightness of the white stones was everywhere softened by agreeable tints; the walls were painted in grey or black, the columns, tinted with yellow or red, and along the cornices ran graceful arabesques, composed of interlacing flowers, where, at intervals, were blended birds that never existed and landscapes that have nowhere been seen. These whims of the imagination that signify nothing pleased the eye and did not try the mind. From time to time a mythological scene, painted without pretension and with bold strokes, recalled to the owner some masterpiece of antique art, and let him enjoy it through this souvenir. Sometimes this petty householder was fortunate enough to possess a bronze imitation of one of the most beautiful works of the Greek sculptors, a dancing satyr, an athlete in combat, a god, a goddess, a performer on the cithara, etc.[1] He knew its value, comprehended its beauty, and placed it on a pedestal in an *atrium* or his peristyle, so as to gaze fondly at it whenever he came in or went out. They were happy people, those rich Pompeians! They knew how to adorn their life with all the charms of comfort, to elevate it by the enjoyment of the arts, and I believe that many important persons in our largest cities would be tempted to envy the lot of the obscure citizens of this little town."

[1] From Pompeii and Herculaneum, that is to say, from two cities of the second order, come the beautiful bronzes in the Museum of Naples which are the admiration of foreigners. Among the middle classes of our provincial towns nothing similar would be found. We must add that the finest treasures in Pompeii were not left there. We know that the inhabitants made excavations after the catastrophe, and that they returned to take away their most precious possessions. We have then to-day only what could not be found at that time or what they neglected to take. (Boissier, *Promenades archéol.*, pp. 314-318.)

II.—Domitian (81–96); Wise Administration of his First Years.

The youth of Domitian[1] had been worthy of the times of Nero, and he had wearied his father and brother by his intrigues. Nevertheless he was sober, to the extent of taking but one meal a day,[2] and he had a taste for military exercises,[3] for study and poetry, especially since the elevation of his family. Vespasian had granted him honours, but no power, and, at the death of Titus, he had only the titles of Cæsar and Prince of the Youth. In his hurry to seize at last that Empire so long coveted he abandoned his dying brother to rush to Rome, to the camp of the prætorians. A *donativum* and the eagerness of the Romans to accept hereditary right whenever it appeared assured him a place which no one moreover was prepared to dispute.

On the day of their coronation there are few bad princes. Almost all begin well, but, in despotic monarchies, the majority end badly, particularly when the reigns are of long duration. Nero, if Britannicus is forgotten, was for five years a good emperor, but absolute power is a downward slope with a precipice at the end. The passions, if not subdued, and adverse circumstances, if not overcome, lead in time into the abyss. Domitian reigned fifteen years, one year longer than Nero, and his reign reproduced the same story: at first a wise government, then every excess. Happily the excesses did not come till late: his *quinquennium* lasted thirteen years.

The two tyrannies differed again in another respect: one had brilliant, sometimes joyous aspects; the other, notwithstanding the magnificence of the festivals, was sad and gloomy. The entire reign of the "bald[4] Nero" was like that of Tiberius in his latter

[1] Titus Flavius Domitianus, born at Rome October 23rd, A.D. 51.

[2] Before and after this single repast he only took a little fruit and a glass of wine. Yet he gave magnificent banquets, but did not tolerate any excess at them, and obliged his guests to leave the table before sunset.

[3] He was so skilful in drawing the bow that he made his arrows pass between the open fingers of a slave or drove two of them, from great distances, into the head of an animal running so as to represent two horns (?). Pliny (*Hist. nat., in procem.*) and Quintilian (x. 1, 91) speak highly of his verses. Suetonius says that as soon as he became emperor he ceased to compose any.

[4] Juvenal, *Sat.*, iv. 38.

years. Fully as vain as the son of Agrippina, Domitian heaped every title upon his own head and decreed deification to himself. His edicts stated: "Our lord and our god ordains . . . ."[1] The new god did not scorn vulgar honours. At the close of an inglorious expedition he assumed twenty-four lictors and the right to sit in the senate in the garb of a conqueror.[2] He was consul seventeen times, and twenty-two times did he have himself proclaimed *imperator* for victories that had not always been gained. He recalled Nero too by his fondness for shows and for building; he revived the Neronian games, gave *mock* sea-fights in which whole fleets were engaged, and celebrated the secular games, although hardly forty-one years had elapsed since their celebration by Claudius. A hundred races were witnessed on one day, each between four *quadrigæ* that whirled five times around the course. This was more than the people asked. To sustain their flagging attention and to render the contests more animated, he supplemented the four factions or colours of the circus, green, blue, red, and white, by two new colours, gold and violet, *aurata et purpura*. Even races between young girls were seen in the stadium. The quæstors had long since abandoned the ruinous custom of exhibiting gladiatorial combats when they entered into office; Domitian forced them to resume it, and never failed to be present at all these shows. Martial praises him for having re-established a less dangerous kind of boxing.[3] He distributed three gratuities among the people, each of 300 sesterces a head, and on one occasion he gave them a

Sham Sea-fight, after a Coin of Domitian.

[1] Caligula had already styled himself god, and before Domitian the words *Dominus noster* were employed in speaking of the emperor. (Labus, *Marm. antichi bresciani*, p. 96, No. 4.)

[2] Martial and Statius call him *Dacicus*, but this name is not found on the coins.

[3] *Et pugnat virtus simpliciore manu* (*Epigr.*, VIII. lxxx.). [That is without the loaded cæstus.—*Ed.*]

bountiful feast. Several times he had presents of all sorts thrown to the spectators, for which the knights and even the senators struggled as greedily as the ragged plebeians; and the son of the Sabine horse-dealer took pleasure in seeing the Roman people, their pontiffs, their men of consular rank, and their prætorians, rolling at his feet in the dust in order to fight for the master's alms.

Memorial of the Secular Games.[2]

Titus had been unable to repair all the disasters of the last conflagration; but Domitian widened several streets,[1] raised up again the public buildings that had fallen, and constructed a great many others with more magnificence than taste.[3] The mere gilding of the Capitol, according to Plutarch, cost him over 12,000 talents,[4] "more than all Olympus is worth," says Martial.[5] Less irreverent than the poet, we will say that true art has no need of these showy adornments. The dwelling which he constructed for himself on the Palatine surpassed in magnificence everything that Rome had hitherto seen.[6]

Congiarium.[7]

The form given by Vespasian to the imperial government continued. Domitian administered justice zealously, and very often granted extra sessions in his court in the Forum. Carefully reviewing the judgments from which an appeal was made, he annulled several decisions of the centumviri that had

[1] Martial, *Epigr.*, VII. lxi.

[2] COS. XIII. LVD. SAEC. A. POP. FRVG. AC. SC. (*Ludos sæculares fecit, a populo fruges accepit*). The emperor seated upon a daïs; before him two figures clothed with togas standing, holding pateræ. Reverse of a large bronze of Domitian. (Cohen, No. 83.)

[3] Plutarch, who saw at Athens the columns of Pentelic marble which were to be used on the Capitol, says (*Public.*, 17) that they were ruined at Rome in the attempt to re-cut them.

[4] Plutarch, *Public.*, 15. About £2,900,000.

[5] *Epigr.*, IX. iv. 14:

Nam tibi quod solvat, non habet arca Jovis.

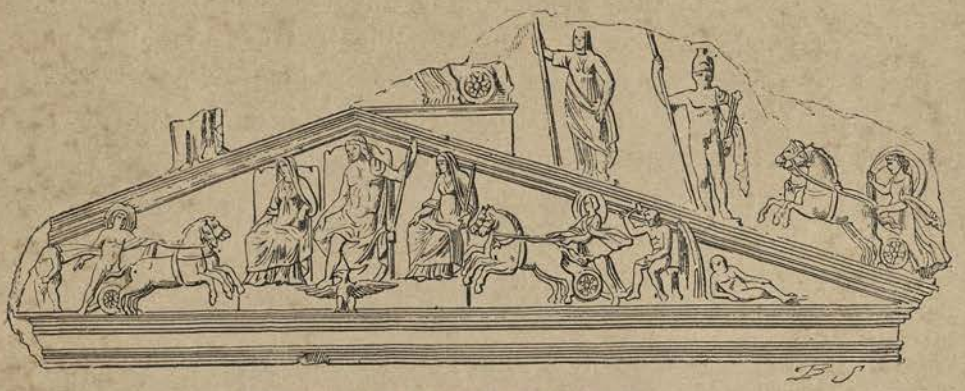
In Suetonius (*Dom.*, 4–5) the long and wearisome enumeration of his games and constructions may be seen.

[6] M. Rosa has recently recovered the foundations of this palace and the courses of the ground floor, so that it has been easy to restore the general plan. See the description of it in M. Boissier's *Promenades archéologiques*.

[7] CONG. II. COS. II. SC. Domitian seated and Liberality standing; below, a figure spreading out its garment to receive the gift. Reverse of a large bronze.

been prompted by favouritism, branded with infamy the corrupt judges, and banished the delators who had accused an innocent person.

Domitian proved himself the strictest prince since Augustus



Pediment of the Fourth Temple of the Capitol.[1]

with respect to public order. He assumed the title of perpetual censor and rigorously maintained the distinction of the orders in solemnities. On one occasion he restored to the owner a slave who had fraudulently entered the army, where he had risen to the rank of centurion. He prosecuted the authors of libels, drove from the senate a quæstor of long standing who was too fond of pantomimes, and did two things that were very unpleasant to the common people, but one of which was very moral, and the other very necessary: he suppressed the scandalous public exhibitions of the mimes, which were the delight of the lower orders,[2] and abolished the stalls that blocked up the streets but gave these plebeians a livelihood.[3] One of the freedmen of the palace had reared a monument to his son with stones destined for the Capitol.

Fourth Temple of the Capitol, restored by Domitian (Silver Coin of A.D. 82).

[1] From a sketch in the library of Coburg. At the apex of the pediment must have been Jupiter seated or standing in the triumphal chariot, accompanied by the two goddesses whose statues were also together within the temple. Mars with his helmet and Minerva holding a lance are still perfectly recognizable. The sun, the moon, the cyclops, a reclining river (the Tiber?) represent the Universe, in order that all creation may take part in the homage rendered to the three principal deities. (Cf. Saglio, p. 904.)

[2] He only authorized their exhibitions at private houses. Nerva set aside this interdict, which Trajan at first renewed and then repealed after his first Dacic triumph. (Pliny, *Pan.*, 46.)

[3] Martial.

Domitian caused the tomb to be destroyed, as if it were a sacrilege.[1] His morals were not those of a censor. He seduced his brother's daughter, Julia, and the "new Juno," as the Greeks called her, perished in her attempt to destroy the proof of a criminal intercourse.[2] But if he made allowances for himself he made none for others. Vespasian and Titus had connived at the misconduct of the priestesses of Vesta; but under Domitian three received orders to put themselves to death, and the chief vestal, Cornelia, was entombed alive, according to the ancient custom. When the high-priests came to lead her to her doom, she raised her hands towards heaven, invoked Vesta and the other gods, nor did she cease repeating during the whole journey: "What! Cæsar declares me, whose sacrifices have made him triumph, guilty of incest!" As she was descending into the fatal vault one of her veils caught in the steps. She unfastened it, and when the executioner offered to assist her she refused with horror, as if the mere touch of that hand must have defiled her maiden purity. A Roman knight, the [supposed] partner of her crime, was scourged to death in the Cometium; another of senatorial rank was banished.[5] These condemnations spread terror in the city, and Statius is truthful this time when, describing the colossal statue of Domitian, he points out the bronze eyes fixed upon the

Julia, daughter of Titus.[3]

A Vestal.[4]

[1] Suet., *Dom.*, 8: *Ne qua religio deum contaminaretur.*

[2] Νέαν Ἥραν. *Bull. de corresp. hellénique*, vol. vi. p. 396.

[3] From an engraved stone (*aqua marina*), with the name Evodus cut in it (*Cabinet de France*, No. 2,089).

[4] BELLICIAE MODESTE, Virgo Vestalis (*Bellicia Modesta, Vestal Virgin*). From a medallion in the *Cabinet de France*.

[5] Pliny (*Epist.*, IV. xi.) has quite a desire to make her appear innocent, in order to leave one crime more on the memory of Domitian; but he himself hardly seems to believe in this innocence; and when, under Nerva, the exiles were recalled, Cornelia's paramour, who had

temple of Vesta as if to be assured that the Trojan fire is ceaselessly burning in the centre of the silent sanctuary, and that the goddess is at last satisfied with the virtue of her priestesses.[1] The *Lex Scantinia*, against a shameful vice, was rigidly applied, even to

Julia, daughter of Titus (Bust in the Uffizi Gallery).

knights and senators. A member of the equestrian order had taken back his wife after having repudiated her on the charge of adultery. Domitian struck his name off the list of judges. Women who had disgraced themselves were not allowed to go in a litter or even to receive a bequest or acquire an inheritance. He prohibited

been banished to Sicily, was excepted. She appeared then, even at that time, to have been guilty. Suetonius has no doubt of it (*Dom.*, 8), and Juvenal (*Sat.*, iv. 9 and 10) affirms it. Plutarch's narration (*Quæst. Rom.*, 83) refers probably to the same persons. The city was in consternation, he says, and when the high-priests were consulted they had ordered that two Gauls and two Greeks should be buried alive in the Forum Boarium.

[1] *Silvæ*, I. i. 35.

mutilation.[1] He even strove, like Augustus, to render enfranchisement more difficult. Finally, to draw closer the ancient bonds of the clients, he suppressed the *sportula* that was paid by the patrons in silver to the amount of 25 asses, and re-established the custom of general repasts, *cœnæ rectæ*. The king, as the patron was called, once more made his client sit at his table, but before some refuse, while he himself supped magnificently.

Vespasian had begun war against effeminate customs and bad morals. Domitian continued it energetically, and Quintilian, therefore, calls him "the most religious censor."[2] The epithet is too strong, for the censorship was rigorous without succeeding, be it understood, in restoring "the temples to the gods and morals to the people," as Martial claims, or "in forcing modesty to return to families."[3] Read the poet himself, and you will see the efficacy of such laws. No one could affirm, however, that these reforms were utterly useless, and when we again find virtuous society at Rome we shall remember the severities of Vespasian and his son.

Wine-growing was the principal form of what little agriculture still existed in Italy. Domitian forbade the planting of new vines, in order to leave room for corn, and to increase the price of the wines of the peninsula he ordered half of the old plantations in the provinces to be rooted up; an unwise measure, which, however, was not executed. His father and brother had made the husbandmen uneasy by seizing for the treasury the waste land of the colonies. Domitian left it to its former possessors, at the same time granting them the benefit of prescription, and "thus," says an old author, "he delivered all Italy from fear."[4]

In his early days he did not appear avaricious, and what was a virtue not common among Romans, he refused the inheritances of those who had children. He delivered from all prosecution debtors whose names had been posted in the treasury for more

[1] Dion, lvii. 2; Martial, *Epigr.*, IX. vii. and viii.

[2] *Sanctissimus censor*, iv., *in Proœm.*

[3] Martial, *Epigr.*, VI. ii. and vii.: X. cii.; Statius, *Silv.*, III. iv. 74, and IV. iii. 13. Cf. Suet., *Dom.*, 7, and Amm. Marcellinus, xviii. 4.

[4] Aggenus, *de Controv. agr.* ap. Goes., p. 68. Cf. Suet., *Dom.* 9: *Subseciva, quæ divisis per veteranos agris carptim superfuerant, veteribus possessoribus ut usucapta concessit.* Cf. Orelli, No. 3,118.

than five years, and to repress the interested zeal of delators for the rights of the treasury, he condemned the accusers to exile when they did not gain their cause. "A prince," he used to say, "who does not punish informers, encourages them."

He increased the pay of the soldiers by one-third, a measure necessitated by the increased cost of everything since Cæsar. The dictator had fixed their annual pay at nine pieces of gold. It was still at this rate under Domitian, who raised it to twelve.[1] To prevent revolts, he forbade his officers to assemble two legions in the same camp, or to receive in the military coffer, from the savings of the soldiers, more than 1,000 sesterces in the name of each of them.[2] He wished likewise to diminish the army in order to reduce the expense; but the fear of the barbarians prevented it. Like his father also, Domitian, who affected to take Minerva for a patroness,[3] encouraged arts and letters. His great works furnished occupation for artists, and we see him giving 600,000 sesterces at once to a philosopher to purchase an estate close to Prusa. In order to replace the libraries destroyed by the last conflagrations, he instituted a search for books in every quarter, and had copies of lost works made at Alexandria.[4] A poet himself, he invited Statius and Martial to his palace, without, however, raising them by his presents to the fortune which they still solicited. He received the praises of Valerius Flaccus, Silius Italicus, and of Quintilian, to whom he intrusted the education of his youthful kinsmen,[5] and he instituted at the Capitol a quinquennial contest in poetry, eloquence, and music, which was still solemnized in the fifth century (*agon Capitolinus*). Another took place every year in his Alban palace. Under him Juvenal composed his earliest satire, the seventh. Pliny the Elder had just died; but Tacitus, whom the emperor had appointed quindecemvir and prætor (A.D. 88), had not

[1] The pay was five asses at the time of Polybius (vi. 39), or eight, taking into account the reductions which caused sixteen asses to be reckoned to the denarius instead of ten. Cæsar doubled it, ten asses (Suet., *Cæs*, 26). It was then under Domitian thirteen asses = $\frac{1}{3}$ths of a denarius a day = twenty-five denarii a month, or 300 a year, instead of 225. [The denarius was nearly equal to a franc.—*Ed.*]

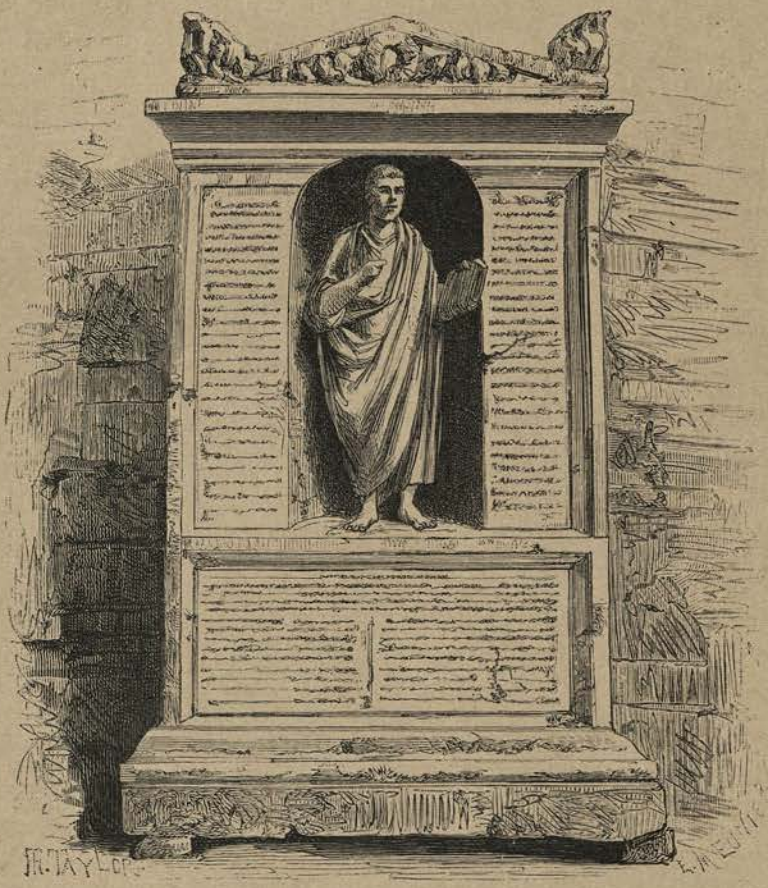
[2] Each legion had its chest for savings; Saturninus, of whom we shall speak further, had taken these deposits as a pledge to make sure of the fidelity of the soldiers.

[3] *Familiare numen Minervæ* (Quintilian, *Inst. orat.*, x. 1). Cf. Suet., *Dom.*, 15.

[4] Pliny, *Epist.*, X. lxxvi.; Suet., *Dom.*, 20.

[5] Silius Italicus, *Punic.*, iii. 618 *sq.*; Quintilian, *Inst. orat.*, ix., *in Proœm.*

as yet written his *Life of Agricola*,[1] and Pliny the Younger, who had also attained the prætorship in A.D. 93, was in possession of his full renown. Thus in this reign we meet with the most



Tomb of a Child victorious in the contest in Eloquence and Music.[2]

eminent poets of the second order, a famous prose-writer, and an author of genius who was already meditating his scathing works. We find also celebrated jurisconsults, Palfurius and Armillatus, whom Juvenal reproaches with unduly multiplying the royal

[1] After his prætorship Tacitus withdrew from Rome, and he was still absent in A.D. 93. Was it in consequence of banishment? This has been asserted, but everything is opposed to the supposition, and Borghesi (vii. 322) thinks that according to custom Tacitus, at the expiration of his prætorship, received the command of a legion or the government of an imperial province, probably Belgica, where his father had been procurator, and where he finished collecting materials for his work *de Moribus Germaniæ*.

[2] Discovered in 1871 in one of the towers of the *porta Salaria*. The young laureate had vanquished fifty-two competitors. Two inscriptions are carved on this tomb; one containing his history, the other his Greek verses.

prerogatives,[1] and especially the chief of the disciples of Proculus, Pegasus, who was appointed prefect of Rome, and whom the satirist is forced to call "a most conscientious interpreter of the laws."[2] Thanks to these grave personages who had succeeded one another uninterruptedly since the time of Augustus in the councils of the prince, civil society, by its subordinate position sheltered from the tempests that were agitating political society, became better organized every day. This long continued, and the worst reigns contained the most precious conquests of the spirit of civil law.

We have no details about the administration of Domitian in the provinces. Some inscriptions testify that he continued there the works of his father, and we may believe that his authority proved equitable and firm, when we read these words of a biographer by no means friendly to him: "He succeeded so well in curbing the magistrates of Rome and the governors of the provinces, that they were never more disinterested or just:[3] or when we recollect that one of the most active delators, Bæbius Massa, whom the inhabitants of Bætica accused, was convicted on the pleading of Senecio and Pliny the Younger. Suetonius adds these words, which furnish much occasion for thought: "The majority of those whom he forced to be just and upright we have seen accused after him of all sorts of crimes," which means that under the milder administration that replaced his they made up for their compulsory rectitude. The emperors who have been most decried —I am not speaking of madmen like Caligula and Nero, but of shrewd rulers such as Tiberius and Domitian—were a terror to the nobility, and when the dangers of their position had developed

[1] Juvenal, *Sat.*, iv. 53:

Quidquid conspicuum pulchrumque est æquore toto,
Res fisci est.

For Palfurius, see above, p. 664.

[2] . . . . *optimus atque*
Interpres legum sanctissimus.
(Juvenal, *ibid.*, 78–79.)

[3] Suet., *Dom.*, 8. The selections of Domitian were often happy. He advanced Tacitus (*Hist.*, i. 1), Pliny, the father of Trajan, etc.: he appointed consuls: Nerva, Trajan, Verginius Rufus, Agricola, the grandfather of Antoninus; the father of Tacitus was probably governor of Belgium, which Tacitus ruled from A.D. 90 to A.D. 92. Borghesi, vii. pp. 199 and 321, etc. Valerius Homulus extolled the government of Domitian to Trajan: "He was a detestable prince," said he, "but one who knew whom to trust." He added: *Meliorem esse rem publicam et prope tutiorem in qua princeps malus est, ea in qua sunt amici principis mali* (Lampridius, *Alex. Sev.*, 65).

in them a cruelty natural to this people, whose keenest pleasure was to see blood, they struck all around them without pity. But, as we have already said, the sole question for 80,000,000 men was to have peace and order.

After having pointed out the absolute power of the emperors the provincial Appian adds: "This form of government has now stood nearly 200 years, and in that space of time the city has been adorned in a marvellous manner, the revenues of the Empire have increased, while, by the boon of a constant peace, the people have reached the highest pitch of prosperity." We see what importance the provincials set upon the tragedies occurring at Rome. At best they seemed to them lessons in equality given to people who scarcely comprehended it, and a sort of duel between the rich of yesterday and the rich of to-morrow. With the fabulist whom "standards and plumes" terrified, they drew from the spectacle of such terrible vicissitudes this moral: "The common people always escape, but the leaders fall.[1] Delation removes what delation had bestowed." Horace had already celebrated, in the time of Augustus, the *aurea mediocritas;* Martial extols it again in the days of Domitian: with princes who have the power to bestow, but also to take away everything, it is the prayer of the wise.

There were several wars under Domitian, all defensive excepting the expedition against the Catti, which was only a great civil measure to drive away the hostile marauders from the frontier.[2]

If Pliny the Younger and Tacitus are to be believed, these wars were like those which Caligula waged: Domitian's victories were defeats; his captives, purchased slaves; his triumphs, audacious falsehoods. Suetonius is not so severe, but he would not have failed to be so, seeing that he relates with so much complacency the disgraceful adventures of Caius on the Rhine and on the shore of the Channel, if Domitian had renewed the comedy of Caligula, procuring himself provincials "of triumphal stature." But Suetonius wrote neither the *Panegyric* of Trajan nor the *Life of Agricola;* he had no anxiety to eclipse, in behalf of his prince, all the imperial glories, nor to magnify the renown of a lieutenant by

[1] Phædrus, *Fab.*, iv. 6.

[2] The consul Frontinus, a contemporary, says of the Catti: *qui in armis erant . . . . Nec ignoraret (Domitianus) majore bellum molitione initūros (Strat.*, i. 8).

letting us have a glimpse of the mighty deeds which he would have performed but for the jealousy of his chief. "Domitian," he says, "made several wars; some that he undertook of his own accord and others that he could not avoid, such as the expedition against the Sarmatians, who had massacred a legion, and the two campaigns against the Dacians to avenge two defeats sustained by his troops. After several battles of mingled success and failure, he celebrated a double triumph, and offered to Jupiter Capitolinus a laurel crown."[1]

Domitian *Germanicus*.[2]

The Empire was constrained, for its own security, to make its power felt from time to time by the restless hordes that bordered its double frontier on the Rhine and the Danube, and Domitian, in setting about this himself, was only following the example of his most illustrious predecessors. During the revolt of Civilis, the Catti (Nassau, Hesse, and part of Westphalia) had attempted to surprise Mayence. Vespasian had not deemed it prudent to avenge this insult; but Domitian thought that after two emperors who had never left Rome since their accession it was necessary for the third, even in view of his security, to show himself to the legions and end their long leisure by expeditions of no danger. In A.D. 84 he placed himself at the head of the army on the Rhine, penetrated the territory of the Catti, who fell back into the depths of their forests, and on his return he assumed the title of Germanicus, which he did not merit for an expedition without battles or conquests. Nevertheless a military writer who perhaps took part in this campaign, Frontinus, speaks of it with praise,[4] and it seems to have attained the desired

Germany captive.[3]

[1] *Dom.*, 6. Aurel. Victor (*de Cæs.*, ii.) says also: *Dacis et Cattorum manu devictis*, and (*Epist.* ii.): *Cattos, Germanosque devicit*, which explains the words *victis parcentia fœdera Cattis* of Statius (*Silv.* iii. 3, 168).

[2] IMP. CAES. DOMIT. AUG. GERM. P. M. TR. POT. V. (Silver medallion in the *Cabinet de France*.)

[3] GERMANIA CAPTA. Trophy between a German seated upon a shield and a German standing: at the feet of the latter, helmet and shield. Great bronze. Cohen, No. 135.

[4] *Strateg.*, i. 1, 8; ii. 11, 7.

end, since, on the Rhine, peace was not once disturbed during this reign.

The selection of Trajan for the government of Upper Germany shows that Domitian wished a serious supervision in that quarter.[1] The new general, in spite of his fighting temper, bent his energies to constructing powerful defensive works by covering the south-west of Germany with a line of fortified posts, earth embankments and entrenchments, traces of which are found here and there under the names of Devils' Walls, Heathens' Moats, and the like, from the Rhine, just below Mayence, to the Danube, near Ratisbon. Drusus, Tiberius, and Germanicus had commenced these works a century before, opposite Bonn, and had extended them in a line parallel to the Rhine through Westphalia, perhaps as far as the Taunus, whose numerous thermal springs early attracted the Romans.

The valley of the Upper Danube, in ancient times peopled by Celts, had been Germanized by the Teutons and the Suevi. But after the defeat of Ariovistus and the retreat of the Marcomanni upon Bohemia, especially when Augustus had taken possession of the right bank of the Danube and covered the left bank of the Rhine with camps and colonies, this corner of Germany, which the Rhine surrounds and where the Danube takes its rise, had no longer been tenable by the barbarians. Gauls had come back to these deserted fields, and, in return for Roman protection, paid the Empire the tithe of their harvests (*agri decumates*). To protect their farms and a territory which would have opened Gaul and Helvetia to the Germans, the works commenced on the Lower Rhine were continued to the Danube. Many rulers down to Probus applied themselves to this, although it would not be possible to give each his due. Domitian gave particular attention to it, for, according to Frontinus,[2] he had a line of defence

[1] According to the general opinion, from Tillemont to M. des Vergers (*Chron. du règne de Trajan*), it was Domitian who gave this province to Trajan; according to Mommsen (*Étude sur Pline*, in the *Bibl. de l'École des hautes études*, p. 10, n. 2), and Dierauer (*Gesch. Traj.*, p. 15), it would be Nerva; but their strongest proof is an antithesis of Pliny which even Burnouf has been unable to take literally. Another passage shows that, in the last year of Domitian, Trajan occupied a very prominent position, *omnibus excelsior* (*Pan.*, 94); and if this nomination had been made by Nerva, Pliny would not have failed to extract some oratorical effect from this prudent choice.

[2] *Strateg.*, i. 3, 10: . . . . *limitibus per centum viginti millia passuum actis* . . . .

Domitian (Statue in the Vatican, Braccio Nuovo, No. 129).

constructed 120 miles long. During the revolt of a legate, of which we shall speak further, the Germans had penetrated as far as the Rhine and threatened Gaul; and Trajan was without doubt charged to prevent a like danger. There is a difference of opinion respecting the plan of fortifications which, crossing the Taunus and the Suabian Alps, seems to have enveloped the lower valley of the Maine, where is found the highway for penetrating into the heart of Germany and the whole basin of the Neckar. Under cover of these defences, which threw the Germans back upon the centre of their country, the number of people increased in the tithe-lands (*agri decumates*). They had their religious and political centre at Aræ Flaviæ (Rothweil on the Neckar), where they assembled and adored the divinity of Rome and its emperors. It was, as it were, a new province forming at the expense of barbarism firmly held in check, just as a new territory is formed by driving back with dikes the roving waters.[1]

The Goddess Rome (Statue of the Capitol. *Mus. Cap.*, vol. i. p. 10.)

In the interior of Germany Domitian formed useful alliances without compromising his armies. He sent money to a chief of the Cherusci, but refused to support him with troops, and he persuaded the king of the Semnones to come to Rome with the virgin

[1] Tacitus, *Germ.*, 29; Martial, *Epigr.*, X. vii.

Ganna, who had succeeded Velleda as prophetess of the Germans. These two persons went back loaded with presents, and returned to their country with an idea of Roman might that was worth more for the tranquillity of the frontiers than a victory of the legions.[1]

In Britain the same policy was pursued and the same works were executed. Since the heavy blows struck by Plautius under Claudius, and by Suetonius Paulinus under Nero, war had been almost stopped and civilization had begun its work. We have seen (pp. 498-9) with what rapidity Roman manners, commerce, and usury had spread throughout the island. Vespasian, who had distinguished himself in the first campaign of the conquest, wished to finish the undertaking of Claudius, and had sent to Britain three skilful generals in succession; at first, Cerialis and Frontinus, who quelled the Brigantes and the Silures, two dreaded nations in the north and south-west; then, in A.D. 78, Agricola, who subdued the Ordovices in the centre of Wales and the Isle of Man. The whole of Britain was then conquered and pacified as far as the Highlands of Scotland. Agricola approached these mountains, but halted at the isthmus, thirty miles in breadth, which extends between the two seas, from the Clyde to the Firth of Forth, and covered this space with strongholds connected by an intrenchment, so as to secure the province against the incursions of the mountaineers. These Highlanders came bravely to the attack; but he defeated them at the foot of the Grampians, notwithstanding the bravery of their chief, Galgac, to whom Tacitus ascribes a speech which no Roman ear heard and which not one Latin could have understood. The legions, after this success, retired behind their line of defence; but the fleet reconnoitred the northerly parts of the island, the Orkneys, and perhaps the Shetlands.

Coin representing Britain.[2]

Tacitus insists that Domitian became alarmed at Agricola's glory. But no very far-echoing fame could be gained in these combats, which were almost without peril, against tribes few in numbers, badly armed, and so poor that, in his scanty booty, the

[1] Dion, lxvii. 5.

[2] Bruce, *The Roman Wall*, p. 15.

conqueror did not find a trophy to display before the people of Rome. Agricola, a methodical and slow captain, had not the great qualities which render generals formidable to a suspicious government; an honest man, a good citizen, submissive to law and the ruler, he could not have caused anxiety to an emperor who did not fear to give the consulate and his best army to Trajan. Agricola has been overrated [owing to the panegyric of Tacitus]; he neither conquered nor civilized Britain, as his son-in-law would

Fragment of Roman Wall containing the name of Agricola (Great Britain).[1]

lead us to believe, but by two successes and by useful works he worthily employed a mission whose duration was greater than that of ordinary commands:[2] seven years (A.D. 78-84). Tacitus is forced to say that Domitian proposed his recall in the senate "with lofty praises, at the same time decreeing to him the triumphal decorations, a statue crowned with laurel, and the other honours which supply the place of the ancient triumph." But he takes care to add that Agricola returned modestly to Rome by night, without display; that the prince received him coldly, though offering him the government of Syria, and finally that Agricola had the wisdom

[1] Bruce, *The Roman Wall*, p. 82. [The name here belongs to an inferior officer, *optio*.—*Ed.*]

[2] Borghesi (*Œuvres*, iii. p. 188) prolongs to the end of the year 85 Agricola's command in Britain. The usual duration of the legateship in Britain, according to Hübner (*Rhein. Mus.*, xii. 57) was three years.

to refuse what it was hoped he would decline. The suspicious tyrant and the great general in disgrace make one of those gloomy pictures in which Tacitus excels; but on thinking of the signal honours bestowed upon his father-in-law and of the favour which he himself enjoyed with Domitian,[1] we reflect that it was useful, under Nerva, to appear a victim of his predecessor. Agricola lived nine years longer,[2] "without seeking, by vain display, fame and some fatal destiny. Let those who admire every imprudent word, every audacious and guilty act, learn by this example, that, even under a bad prince, there may be great citizens; that moderation and obedience, if ability and firmness are there, give glory as well as those ambitious deaths which do not help the State." By these words Tacitus justifies the wise reserve of his father-in-law, and, in the same breath, condemns those useless acts of temerity which he has so often glorified in his *Annals* and *Histories*.

In recalling Agricola Domitian had doubtless wished to inaugurate a peace policy in Britain which would permit him to reduce his military expenses. We have seen that he imposed the same conduct upon Trajan, who, but a few steps from magnificent battle-fields where so many generals had gained glory, was obliged to restrain his ardour. When the Lygii, at war with Sclavonic tribes, tried by a demand for aid to entangle the Empire in their quarrels, Domitian sent them a hundred knights, some money, and promises. At another point of Germany a terrible struggle broke out: one tribe, the Bructeri, suffered a great disaster "by special favour of the gods towards us. Heaven did not even refuse us the spectacle of this combat in which 60,000 barbarians fell, not by the sword of the Romans, but under their eyes and for their diversion. May the nations persevere in this hatred of one another!"[3] From the days of Tiberius this homicidal prayer was the basis of the imperial policy towards the barbarians.

The Dacians established in the vast steppes to-day inhabited

[1] *Dignitas nostra . . . . a Domitiano longius provecta* (*Hist.*, i., 1). The *Life of Agricola* was written A.D. 97, after the assassination of Domitian.

[2] When he died there was a rumour of poison. "We had no proof," says Tacitus, "which authorizes me to affirm it." This reserve on the part of Tacitus is an acquittal for Domitian.

[3] Tac., *Germ.*, 33.

by the Hungarians, Transylvanians, and Roumanians, from the Tanais to the Black Sea, with lofty mountains for refuge, had for a century past singularly increased in numbers. Life is easy, indeed, in these fertile plains, where the same field yields corn ten years in succession without being exhausted and which nourish with

Dacian King (Bust in the Museum of Naples, No. 223 in the Catalogue).

their flocks a large part of western Europe, while the mountainous region is one of the richest on the continent in mines of gold, silver, iron, copper, and rock salt. Up to the epoch which we have reached the Dacians had not been troublesome neighbours. We hear of several incursions during the reign of Tiberius, but there was no serious invasion except at the time of the Vitellian War, when Antonius had left Mœsia exposed by drawing towards the Alps the troops intrusted with its defence. Even this invasion cannot have been very formidable, since it only required one

legion to stop it and a few reinforcements sent later to restore quiet along the Danube.[1]

As long as these tribes remained isolated they were not to be feared; but we have seen that, at the time of Julius Cæsar, one of their chiefs, Byrebistas, had united the Dacians to the Getæ and raised a formidable empire, comprising once the whole valley of the Danube from Noricum to the Euxine.[2] It appears that a similar revolution was accomplished among the hordes settled on the north of the river in the Flavian era, and that they had rallied about a skilful and determined chief, who employed admirably well the methods of war common among barbarians, audacious incursions and rapid flight, but capable of using the tactics of regular warfare. Like Marbodius in the days of Augustus, the Decebalus[3] dreamed of establishing for himself a great empire, and knowing that Roman tactics would double the strength of his warlike bands and that civilization would enable him to profit by immense resources lying useless in the hands of his people, he attracted the deserters from the legions and artisans from the provinces, while at the same time he formed friendly relations with all his neighbours and sent emissaries to the Parthians.[4] When he considered himself prepared, he crossed the Danube, overthrew one legion, killed the governor of Lower Mœsia, Oppius Sabinus, and laid waste all the right bank of the river as far as the foot of the mountains. Domitian had to avenge this insult. In the summer of A.D. 86 he proceeded to Mœsia, where an army was assembling under command of the prefect of the prætorians, Cornelius Fuscus, and after the first operations, which drove the barbarians back upon the left bank, he returned to Italy. The following year (A.D. 87) Fuscus passed the river, ventured imprudently away from its shores, and then had to retreat disastrously, losing an eagle, a legion, and his life. This check was repaired in the following year by Calpurnius Julianus, governor of Upper Mœsia, who conquered the Dacians in a great battle, laid waste their country, and induced them to beg for peace.

[1] Tac., *Hist.* iii. 46.

[2] Vol. iii. p. 636 *sq.*

[3] This word, which would signify according to Sanscrit etymology, *Dhâvakabala, the strength of the Dacians*, seems not to be a proper name, but a title.

[4] Pliny, *Epist.*, x. 16.

In spite of his defeat the Decebalus seems to have retained his pride, and Domitian, notwithstanding his victory, exercised moderation. This war wearied him; he desired to end it without disputing over the conditions (December, A.D. 89), and since the Dacians had delivered up the Roman arms, the prisoners in their possession, and hostages, he withdrew his legions from their territory, on condition that they in turn would respect that which belonged to the Empire. The ambassadors of the Decebalus went to Rome and carried to the senate a letter from their prince, which without doubt contained a pledge, and his brother (?) Diegis proceeded to the Roman camp to receive a crown from the hand of Domitian, as if the barbarian chief was reduced to the rank of princes who owed their royalty to Rome. In order to ratify the friendship with his new ally, Domitian sent him as a present money, curious objects taken from the imperial palace, and artisans skilled in all kinds of work.

Domitian with Crown of Laurel and Breast-plate (Bust from the Museum of the Louvre).

This peace did not extend the frontiers of the Empire.[1] But Augustus and Tiberius had not wished Roman dominion to cross the Rhine and the Euphrates; and like them, Domitian thought that it was not prudent to extend it over the Danube. This, too,

[1] Dion, lxviii. 6, 10. Eckhel (*Doctr. num.*, iv. p. 381) says that there does not exist a single coin that can furnish the least indication about this war.

came to be Hadrian's opinion, when he abandoned the conquests of Trajan beyond the Euphrates. This prudent policy obtained for Domitian the shame of being called the tributary of barbarians by his second successor's courtiers, who glorified the conqueror of Dacia as the avenger of Roman honour.

The words of Suetonius quoted above, and the facts which we know, conflict with the idea of a tribute paid to the Dacians. Pliny himself who, with his warlike emperor, returned to the principle that Rome does not treat, but commands—Pliny in his *Panegyric of Trajan* alludes only to a peace debated between the Romans and the barbarians, just as all agreements are effected, and to hostages obtained, he says, in exchange for presents, as if the very name of hostages, *obsides*, whom the emperor received were not the avowal of the defeat of his enemies.[1] But these presents were an old usage of the imperial policy. In this way Nero treated Tiridates of Armenia, and we have seen Augustus treating still better the kings of the Parthians.[2] Already even the emperors were taking into their service entire bands of barbarians, such as that cohort of Usipii whose strange history is related by Tacitus;[3] and Vespasian's generals had granted some money to the Sarmatians and Dacians along the banks of the Danube to guard the passages of the stream, as the English, the Russians, and even the Americans have pensioned so many rajahs, sultans, and chiefs living on their frontiers. Domitian renewed this military pay under form of presents. Trajan himself and Hadrian did not act otherwise. This policy which armed barbarians against barbarians was excellent with a powerful Empire and valiant armies; but it will become a

[1] *Ne inducias quidem nisi æquis conditionibus inibant . . . . obsides non emimus . . . . nec immensis muneribus paciscimur* (*Pan.*, 11 and 12). Dion says expressly that Domitian paid an annual tribute; but Suetonius and Pliny, both contemporaries, do not say so, and they would not have failed to insist upon this disgrace. We have seen the words of Suetonius and Pliny's reasons. As to Dion, we no longer possess his text for his last books, and it is difficult to extricate ourselves from the contradictions of Xiphilinus. Thus, § 7 of book lxvii. is unintelligible, and the account of the great victory of Julianus is placed in § 10, after the peace had been concluded. Moreover, even if he speaks of the tribute in book lxviii. 6, he does not allude to it in book lxvii. 7, where he affirms, on the contrary, that Decebalus ἀτιμῶς ἐτεταλαιπώρητο. Eutropius (vii. 15) says also, without comment, that Domitian triumphed over the Dacians.

[2] Nero had given Tiridates architects and workmen to rebuild his capital, Artaxata. (Suet., *Nero.*) Trajan will also give a pension to the king of the Roxolani. (Spartian, *Hadr.*, 6.)

[3] *Agric.*, 28.

danger and disgrace when military virtues have been lost, and when the pickets and scouts paid by the Empire to guard the country in front of the line of *castra stativa*, no longer feeling behind them the mighty reserve of legions, conduct to the pillage of the provinces those whom they were at first charged to watch and keep in check.

The Marcomanni, the Quadi, whom Tiberius had established on the left of the Danube, and the Sarmatian Iazyges (between the Tanais and the Danube) had refused to aid the Empire during the Dacian war. Threatened with an attack by the army in Pannonia, they sent deputies to the emperor, who were put to death. We do not know how this affair terminated, which was serious, since one legion perished in it,[1] and Dion shows Domitian flying before these tribes. Nevertheless, during the last six years of this reign we hear nothing of any trouble on this frontier, which leads us to think that, by force or money, everything had ended happily.

About the year 89, when the Dacian war was not fully ended,[2] a pretended Nero appeared in the East. The Parthians prepared to support him; but a threatening letter from Domitian forced them to surrender the impostor.

In Africa the Nasamones, already rebellious under Vespasian, rose in revolt again. They were almost exterminated, and Cyrenaica and the region of Tripoli were at last delivered from the continual depredations of these nomads.[3]

The Empire preserved then its strong military position: the provinces did not stir, the frontiers were well guarded, and notwithstanding some momentary successes, the barbarians felt its powerful hand upon them. One thing alone is sad to see, Rome,

[1] Tacitus says (*Hist.*, i. 2): *Coortæ in nos Sarmatarum et Suevorum gentes.* Statius naturally enlarges upon it: *horrida bella* (*Silv.*, iii. 3, 170). During Nerva's reign there were several outbreaks in Pannonia, which terminated favourably for the Romans. (Pliny, *Paneg.*, 8.) The chronology of Domitian's reign is very difficult to settle. Henzen (*Scavi nel bosco sacro de' fratelli Arvali*, p. 107) shows that in the year 89 Domitian was absent from Rome, perhaps for the war in Pannonia.

[2] The triumph for the Dacian war was celebrated, according to Eusebius, in the tenth year of Domitian's reign, and according to Martial, in the month of January, consequently in January, A.D. 91.

[3] This revolt, Zonaras and Eusebius affirm, was caused by Domitian's extortions. But what could he take from these nomads whom Herodotus shows us living on locusts? The remnant of this tribe settled in the south of Marmarica.

and especially the palace. Instead of the wise administrator whom we have hitherto found there, we shall meet a tyrant whose memory has been justly dishonoured.

III.—Cruelties during the Last Years of Domitian.

Domitian did not rush into crime through fondness for blood and brutal caprice. He often used to say that the number of punishments does not depend upon princes, and that those who punish least are not the good princes, but those who have been fortunate enough to find small occasion for harsh measures.[1] The words do not come from a monster of cruelty, only he should have added that there are governments capable of reducing chastisements, because they know how to prevent their necessity. Domitian, on the contrary, suspicious and anxious, multiplied them by the very terror which he felt and by that which he inspired.

Coin with legend: FISCI IUDAICI CALUMNIA SUBLATA.

Suetonius explains his tyranny in a few words: "His conduct was at first a mixture of good and evil; but little by little his virtues became vices; need rendered him avaricious, fear made him cruel, *inopia rapax, metu sævus.*" Vespasian had certainly left his sons an ample treasury. Titus impaired it by his prodigality, and Domitian exhausted it by the enormous cost of his constructions and shows, especially by the increase in the soldiers' pay, which must have raised the annual expenditure by 50,000,000 sesterces. He at once proved very strict about the receipt of taxes. "There is one," says Suetonius, "the collection of which was prosecuted with great harshness, the tax of the double drachma, which the Jews had to pay. From every quarter information was laid in the treasury against those who were living in the Jewish religion without making public profession of it, or who dissimulated their origin so as to escape the tribute imposed upon their nation."[2] An empty treasury

[1] Dion, lxvii. 2.

[2] Suet., *Dom.*, 12. *Interfuisse me,* he adds, *adolescentulum memini, cum a procuratore*

speedily caused, with unscrupulous rulers, a detestable policy. Domitian again put himself on the track of wills. To effect the seizure of an estate it was enough for any person to affirm he had heard the deceased say before his death that Cæsar was his heir. The law of *Majestas* became again a resource: a word, an imprudent act, entailed the loss of all possessions.

Domitian's cruelty appeared especially, and perhaps we should say only,[1] after the revolt of a person of high rank, Antonius Saturninus, who pretended to be a descendant of the triumvir and of that factious tribune whom the Italians had wished to proclaim king.[2] He was in command of two legions in Germany whom he incited to revolt, and he called the Germans to his aid. An unexpected thaw stopped this tribe on the right bank of the Rhine, while Appius Norbanus Maximus, governor of Aquitania,[3] crushed Antonius on the opposite shore. This rebel surely counted on others besides the savage allies to whom he so patriotically opened the Empire. To threaten his emperor with two legions he had accomplices elsewhere, at Rome especially. Consequently Norbanus was careful to burn with all haste the correspondence of the vanquished leader. Domitian in terror sought after these conspirators, and pursued them with fury. This revolt must belong to the year 93, which, as Pliny says,[4] is that in which Domitian's great cruelties began. Thus three contemporary authors show us tyranny following upon provocation, the latter not justifying the former, but certainly explaining it. "Many senators," Suetonius goes on

frequentissimoque concilio inspiceretur nonagenarius senex, an circumsectus esset. The medal given on p. 716 with the legend: *fisci judaici calumnia sublata*, recalls the efforts of the treasury frustrating the frauds, *calumnia*, contrived by the Jews and Judaisers to escape the impost. The palm-tree is one of the symbols of Judæa.

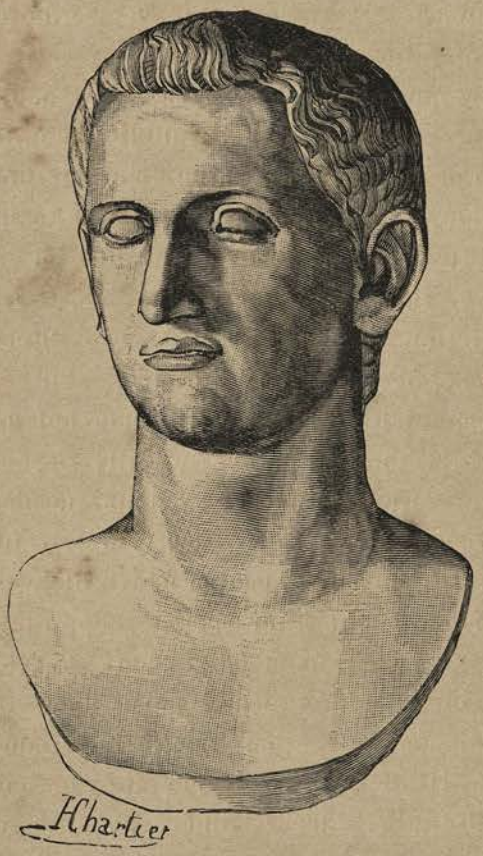
[1] . . . . *aliquanto post civilis belli victoriam sævior* (*ibid.*, 10). Suetonius says that the civil war increased his cruelty, but he enumerates *before* the revolt executions which we learn from Tacitus did not occur until *after*.

[2] See vol. ii. pp. 516 *sq.*

[3] See L. Renier, *Comptes rendus de l'Acad. des inscr.*, 1872, pp. 423 *sq.*

[4] Pliny was prætor in A.D. 93 (Mommsen, *op. cit.*, p. 79), and he had obtained this office before the emperor *profiteretur odium bonorum* (*Pan.*, 95). Tacitus, for his part, says (*Agric.*, 44–45) that at the death of his father-in-law, August 23rd, A.D. 93, the delations of Metius Carus had as yet gained but one victory, *et intra Albanam arcem sententia Messalini strepebat et Massa Bæbius jam tum reus erat.* Since, according to Suetonius and to probability, the *civile nefas* of Antonius and the excesses of the tyranny are in the relation of cause to effect, the certain date of the effect gives as the probable date of the cause the year 93, probably its latter half.

to say, "some of whom had been consuls, were put to death as instigators of plots."[1] Nor were these plots in all cases imaginary. In republics new political questions arise daily; under a despotic government, where men are not as yet moulded to a servile obedience, there is but one question: a change of masters. Out of eleven emperors, including Julius Cæsar, seven, up to this time, had perished by the sword or by poison, a proof of the frightful condition of public affairs; withal, "among the nobles, old age is a miracle."[2] The poet spoke truly: the old families were dying out with extreme rapidity; to secure certain religious functions, Augustus, and later Claudius, had been obliged to create patricians; and now Vespasian had just done the same. That among these victims of the emperors there were many innocent men, that many were slain on the most trivial pretexts, is in the highest degree probable. But the old Roman aristocracy, after living in a state of perpetual conspiracy against Vespasian[3] and his son, had reason to expect that the ruler whose life was constantly threatened should defend



The Young Domitian (Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 24).

[1] *Molitores rerum novarum* (*Dom.* 10). Dion (lxvii. 13) speaks of one Juventius Celsus in the year 95 . . . . συνομόσας ἀνὰ πρώτους μετὰ τινων ἐπ' αὐτῷ.

[2] *Prodigio par est in nobilitate senectus* (Juv., *Sat.*, iv. 97).

[3] *Assiduas conjurationes* (Suet., *Vesp.* 25). Juvenal also says that Brutus would not have been able to deceive these new kings, and adds: *Quis enim jam non intelligat artes patricias?* (*Sat.*, iv. 101.) This is not in contradiction to what has been said on page 649; time was required before the effects of the reform instituted by Vespasian could be produced, and it has already been explained that while this reform diminished the number of conspiracies it did not, certainly, suppress them altogether, for the reason that they were, even under the best of rulers, of the very essence of the government itself.

himself by punishments. It was a hard condition, imposed alike upon the emperor and the nobles; upon the former, by the right of self-defence and the natural disposition to revenge; upon the latter, by the deceitful memories of republican times, and by the too great temptation to overthrow a government whose existence was at the mercy of an assassin's blow. In the early days of a new reign, in the outburst of joy and hope, there was always an effort to come to an understanding, hence peaceful beginnings; but the sad, implacable necessities of an unfortunate situation were not slow in developing, and hatred growing constantly more bitter,[1] each new victim called for a new avenger or a new punishment.

One thing only could have terminated this fearful strife. Between these inveterate enemies the law should have been interposed, protecting the ruler against his own excesses, the nobles against their ambition. But the law of the Empire had not as yet been written.

War also, the occupation of camps, the fame of martial deeds, would have brought a truce to these domestic strifes. A poet of this reign, the matron Sulpicia, laments the peace which leaves these two exasperated adversaries in each other's presence. Like Cato, she calls for reverses which will re-awaken patriotism. "Yes, reverses, to make Rome strong again, to arouse her from the soft and enervating languor of a fatal peace."[2] Juvenal, also a contemporary, repeats this war-cry. But in this degenerate age it met no response.[3] Later, Trajan will hear it, and his military exploits and the fame of them will give his reign its spotless and glorious internal tranquillity. But Parthia was now at peace, Dacia had been pacified, the Germans were held in check, and Britain was conquered. Domitian, who owed nothing to war, and had, indeed, been unsuccessful, as a rule, in military affairs, remained at Rome, in the presence of the senate, like Tiberius without an heir or any support, and, like Tiberius, constantly in danger. "A ruler is never believed," he said, and two great emperors, Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius, will repeat his words in their turn: "A

[1] Domitian had made the fortune of Tacitus; by the hatred shown this emperor by the man whom he had raised to honour we may judge what were the sentiments of others.

[2] *Somno moriuntur obeso.*
Romulidarum igitur longa et gravis exitium pax (vv. 56–57).

[3] *Nunc patimur longæ pacis mala* (*Sat.*, vi. 293).

ruler is never believed in what he says of the plots formed against his life until he has fallen a victim to them."[1] Believing himself surrounded by assassins, Domitian had no longer a moment of tranquillity. He constantly changed his prætorian prefects, lest they should gain the confidence of the soldiers; and he divided the duties of the urban prefect among a dozen magistrates, fearing to intrust so much authority to any one man.[2] He at last withdrew almost completely from all intercourse with men, and lived, sad and idle, with no other employment than the reading of the Memoirs of Tiberius. But Tiberius at least had friends; the son of Vespasian and Domitilla was alone. The imperial palace at Rome was his island of Capri, and this solitude harbouring infamies which Capri had not known, was peopled with like terrors. With a strange weakness, which however was general at that time, Domitian believed in Destiny, and yet hoped to outwit it by the aid of his executioners. The astrologers had terrified him with predictions of evil; to discover and kill the successor, whom no man can kill, he caused the horoscope

Domitilla, mother of Domitian.[3]

[1] Suet., *Dom.*, 20; Vulc. Gallicanus, *Avid. Cass.*, 2.

[2] Lydus, *de Magistratibus*, ii. 19. Alexander Severus did nearly the same thing by adding to the *præfectus Urbi* fourteen *curatores*. (Lamp., *Alex. Sev.*, 32.)

[3] Only known likeness of Domitilla. Colossal marble head, found near Puteoli, at the same time with a head of Domitian. (Campana Museum, d'Escamps, *op. cit.*, No. 79.)

of persons of importance to be cast, and struck wherever his suspicions rested. Thus perished an ex-consul, to whom the Chaldæans had promised brilliant fortune; and Sabinus, the emperor's cousin, for the reason that the herald, who was to proclaim him consul, had by accident used the word imperator instead, in the eyes of many Romans an infallible presage. Informers, who had been proscribed, now re-appeared. Their trade had hitherto been lucrative, as we know, but never before had they assumed such arrogance and cynicism of cruelty. Metius Carus was wont to say: "Do not interfere with my dead men," speaking of those whom he had caused to be proscribed; he would let no one speak ill of them: they were his property, a source of pride to him; he chose to have them honoured, that he himself might thereby be made more formidable—the pride of an assassin boasting that his victims were all men of rank. In those days men saw dragged to the Gemonian steps the real or supposed accomplices of Antonius Saturninus, those whom the stars denounced, those whom wealth or birth, or the independence of their opinions, seemed to render dangerous. In this last list were the Stoic philosophers: Herennius Senecio, who had written a life of Helvidius, and Junius Rusticus, who had eulogized Thrasea. "Tyranny," says Tacitus, "extended its rage even to their works, and caused to be burned, by the triumvirs' hands, the writings of these great men in the place where once a free people assembled.

Domitia Longina, wife of Domitian.[1]

[1] Bust found upon the Cælian hill. (Capitol, Hall of the Emperors, No. 25.)

A strange madness which thought itself able to stifle in flames the voice of the Roman people, the senate's liberty, and the conscience of the human race."[1]

The son of Helvidius bore a dangerous name, and in an interlude which he composed, under the title of Paris and Oenone, was believed to refer to the emperor's conjugal misfortunes;[2] Maternus declaimed against tyrants; Salvius celebrated the birthday of his uncle, the emperor Otho: and all three of them were put to death. A woman having undressed in the presence of the emperor's statue paid for this disrespect with her life. In the room of Metius Pompusianus was found a map of the world and some of Livy's discourses; Lucullus in Britain had allowed the troops to call by his name a new kind of lances: both were condemned. The case of Epaphroditus was brought up, that freedman of Nero who, by the latter's order, had aided that emperor in taking his own life. Thus to have obeyed was criminal; a man who, even at Cæsar's command, had shed the blood of Cæsar could not be allowed to live; Domitian caused him to be put to death.

As in the reign of Nero, and for the same causes, free thought was reputed seditious; all philosophers were expelled from Rome; "he would have been glad to drive out all virtues and all sciences," says Tacitus.[3] But Domitian was not insane to that degree, and his decree of exile was, considering the harshness of the times, only a measure analogous to modern European laws in respect to the press. Certain of these sages, like Artemidorus, whom Pliny ventured to visit, remained in the suburbs of Rome; others established themselves in Italy, but Epictetus fled to Epirus, and Dion Chrysostom took refuge among the Getæ, where he lived by

[1] *Agric.*, 2.

[2] The intrigue of the empress with Paris, the actor, was well known. The emperor had caused Paris to be murdered in the open street and had repudiated Domitia. Being much attached to her, he had, however, received her again, on pretext of yielding to the public entreaty. (Suet., *Dom.*, 3; Dion, lxvii. 3.)

[3] *Expulsis insuper sapientiæ professoribus atque omni bona arte in exsilium acta, ne quid usquam honestum occurreret.* In these last words we see the habitual method of Tacitus, vague declamation being substituted for reasons, which may have been good or bad ones, but were at least serious; the motive in this case being the desire too often felt by governments to rid themselves of an opposition which hampered them. Eusebius places in 89 an edict of banishment against philosophers and mathematicians. Dion (lxvii. 13) speaks of them only in the year 93-94, and the word *αὖθις*, which he employs, may merely refer to the edicts of Nero and Vespasian.

the work of his hands, clad as a slave, digging the ground, and carrying wood and water to the camp of the legions of Mœsia. Of all that belonged to him he had saved and carried with him nothing but a copy of Plato's *Phædon* and one of the orations of Demosthenes. According to Philostratus, Apollonius, on the contrary, returned to Rome in the midst of this whirlwind, where he abused his credit with many persons of importance to form a conspiracy. Nerva is said to have shared in this plot, but to have received no severer punishment than an exile to Tarentum, the astrologers having predicted his approaching death. Another plot, that of Juventius Celsus, brought other punishments, and persecution gradually extending spread from the aristocracy to the common people. Thus went on widening the sanguinary and gloomy circle wherein Domitian struck his blows from day to day.

The instrument of all these executions, which were inevitably followed by confiscations, was the senate, held, as it were, besieged by the emperor's soldiers. But this was a precaution which the timidity of these noble persons rendered quite useless. Where one among them, like the younger Pliny, ventured gently to face the agents of tyranny, there were many who made themselves denouncers, judges, and even executioners. Tacitus cries out in horror: "We have covered ourselves with the innocent blood of Senecio, and our own hands have dragged Helvidius to prison."[1] When the latter was accused, one of the judges in the open senate had laid hands upon him, and with the aid of some colleagues had dragged him out of the Curia; and this encroachment upon the lictors' duty had given the senator the consulship. "We have exhibited to the world a memorable example of *patience*." Tacitus again says: "Our fathers saw the last excesses of liberty; we, of servitude. The practice of informing being destructive to all society, men feared to speak or to listen; and we should be without memory as we are without speech, could we have imposed upon ourselves forgetfulness as well as silence."[2]

The tyrant was perhaps the most unfortunate of all, and it was right that he should be so. Domitian lived in a state of constant alarm; every sound terrified him, every man seemed to him

[1] *Agric.*, 2.
[2] *Ibid.*, 45.

an assassin, every occurrence was an omen of evil. He would walk nowhere save under a portico whose polished walls served as a mirror in which he could see what went on behind him. He questioned his prisoners alone, but holding in his hand the end of the chain which bound them. He, once so fond of games and spectacles, forgot his terrors for a moment in gloomy amusements and cruel buffooneries. On one occasion he invited the most eminent senators and knights to the palace. They are shown into a hall hung with black; by the light of funeral lamps they distinguish biers, and at the head of each a low column, as at a sepulchre, whereon each reads his name. When they have placed themselves on these couches a train of unclad youths enter, representing spectres; they execute a mysterious dance, then seat themselves in the attitude of the Genius of Death, one at each man's bier, and a funeral repast is served, amidst profound silence, only broken by the emperor, who recounts stories of murders and massacres to his guests. The latter feel that their last hour has come; but the fearful entertainment is over at last, the gates are opened, and they are at liberty to depart; each man, however, is accompanied by a slave. On reaching home a messenger from the emperor comes to them. They believe it to be the lictor with a sentence of death. But Domitian only sends to each man his funeral column, which is of silver, and the dishes used in the repast, of

A Fisherman.[1]

[1] Bronze found at Pompeii, on the edge of a pond. (Museum of Naples.)

great value and exquisite workmanship; and lastly, the funeral Genius himself, who is only a handsome young slave.[1]

Another scene is more famous, that of Domitian causing to be discussed by the senate the question what sauce was most suited to a turbot. The story is true, *res vera agitur*, says Juvenal; but we must regard it in a different aspect from that which the satirist takes. A fisherman has the good luck to find in his net a turbot of extraordinary size. In the hope of getting a good price for it he carries it to the emperor at his villa. At the same moment eight or ten senators arrive at the imperial residence, coming out from Rome, as was the custom daily, to pay their respects to Domitian. The emperor, astonished at the great size of the fish, exhibits it to his guests, and each one has a word to say about it. The same thing has happened a thousand times, on a return from hunting or fishing. But the poet has transformed this social scene into a grave deliberation where the cynicism of senatorial servility is paraded; he had the right to do this, since eighteen centuries have taken his word for the story; but a little less art and a little more good sense reduce "his biting hyperbole" to its just proportions.

Meanwhile, even in these terrible years, we find the tyrant occupied with works of public utility. In Spain, he completes a highway which his father has begun; in Italy, he repairs the Latin Road, and opens another between Sinuessa and Puteoli, notwithstanding great difficulties. By the condemnation of Bæbius Massa, whom the inhabitants of Bætica accuse, he guarantees to the provincials their protection against rapacity; and his appointment of Pliny to the prætorship, about this time, shows that there was still place for honest men in his government.

Ecclesiastical writers place a persecution of the Christians in the last months of this reign. No trace of it is found in pagan authors, and the facts which we know can be explained without the necessity of supposing any general measure, then not likely. In the reign of Domitian public anxiety had not been awakened in respect to the new religious society, and it was rather despised than feared, so far as it was known at all. We have seen that

[1] Dion, lxvii.

under Nero the punishment of the Christians was merely a measure of unjust and cruel local police. Six years later the Romans burned the city of David and the temple, but this was an act of destruction imposed by the necessities of war. Accordingly, after the victory of Titus, the legal toleration was continued which the senate and, later, the emperors, had accorded to the Mosaic faith; and Vespasian confirmed it, subject to the regular tax of the didrachm for the Jews and "all those who, without making public confession of this faith, lived after the Jewish manner."[1] The Christians, to whom this clause especially applied, profited by this toleration. The Jewish communities scattered throughout the Empire had always maintained relations with one another, both for the sake of sending the temple money to Jerusalem, and of assisting each other in their business journeys and their obligatory pilgrimages to the Holy Land. They thus formed a sort of immense semi-secret society, and in every place a word or a sign was enough to make the stranger known to his brethren, and in case of need assisted by them. The Christians carefully preserved these habits, thanks to which S. Paul was able to go over so many countries, in every city aided by the disciples whom he found there, or whom he converted from the Jewish or Gentile community. In the end the imperial government became anxious on the subject of the numerous conversions made at Rome, and resolved to put a stop to them.

A senatus-consultum, issued in the reign of Tiberius,[2] had permitted Claudius to put to death a Roman senator affiliated into the Druidic sect—that is to say, guilty of deserting the national religion; a fragment of one promulgated under Vespasian remains to us by which Judaism was limited to the Jewish nation.[3] In

[1] . . . . *qui vel improfessi judaïcam viverent vitam* (Suet., *Dom.*, 12). Dion says, to the same effect: ἐς τὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἔθη ἐξοκέλλοντες (lxvii. 14). Cf. Derenbourg, *Hist. de la Palestine*, p. 331. In pagan eyes Christianity was never anything more than a Jewish sect denying the god of its fathers. Galerius says the same in his edict of 311. (Lact., *de Morte persec.*, 36.)

[2] Vol. iv. pp. 324–5.

[3] Paulus, *Sent.*, v. 22, §§ 3 and 4. We have not the date of this law *de seditiosis*; it probably belongs to the time when Vespasian, after the destruction of Jerusalem, regulated the condition of the Jews, and subjected them to the tax of the didrachm. It was not until after this period that the new crime of *judaizing* appears. Similar prohibitions were made later by Hadrian, Antoninus, and Septimius Severus. (*Digest*, xlviii. 8, 11.)

virtue of this law the Roman citizen who had submitted to the Jewish rite of circumcision, or had caused his slaves to undergo it, was condemned to perpetual exile with loss of all his property; and whoso performed the rite was punished with death. Similar penalties were denounced in cases where Jewish masters caused their Gentile slaves to be circumcised. Thus the imperial government had the wisdom, which our own time has with difficulty regained, never to undertake a religious persecution in the design of compelling the Jews or the Gauls to abandon their hereditary faith; but it believed itself justified in hindering its own people from going over to a foreign religion, which, to the Roman mind, meant the same as abandoning one's native country. It prohibited the Jews, under pain of death, from proselytizing, as, not long since, the Czar of Russia forbade his subjects to travel in foreign lands, or Sweden forbade Protestants to embrace the Roman Catholic religion, or Spain forbade its Roman Catholic subjects to read a Protestant bible.

Thus Rome stands defending herself, but making no attack; leaving to each race its own faith, on condition that hers in turn be respected. With the new spirit of proselytism which, since the earthly country was lost, had animated the synagogue no less than it did the Church, the Jewish colony at Rome had reconstructed itself and had been increased by enfranchisements, which were numerous since the war. Intelligent, active, and insinuating, the Jews had taken up or had created industries which the idleness of the Roman populace left free to them, and, both orthodox or dissident, had made their way into many households. Jews of all the different sects, with their Greek and Roman proselytes, were therefore becoming numerous in the city. But those who, like Tacitus, ought to have seen clearly, since to them was given the right of judging, were quite careless about distinguishing Jews from Christians, considering only that the latter were given over "to contrary superstitions, though of kindred origin." The government understood the subject no better, and was but little concerned with it, caring only that all, whether Jews by birth or by religion, should pay the capitation tax of two drachmas. A passage of Suetonius, quoted above, shows how rigorously this tribute was levied, and how the tax-gatherer settled disputed questions of

Jewish nationality. The emperors had no other feelings than contempt towards what Tacitus and Suetonius call a "shameful superstition;" and, so long as public order was not disturbed, permitted the believers in it to preach among themselves and even to make converts, unless when, as in the case of Nero, they had need of obscure victims to tranquillize a popular excitement, or, as in the case of Domitian, of illustrious criminals to suffer for real or supposed conspiracies. During fourteen years Domitian asked nothing more of Jews or Christians than the payment of the particular tax laid upon their race; but, eight months before his death, at the period of his greatest terrors, he bethought himself that imperial policy had united to the crime of treason a new offence, to wit, that of druidizing or of judaizing. The censor, the pontifex maximus, who in this reign had put to death four vestals, appeared to be fulfilling his duty of zealous defender of the national religion when he prosecuted senators who, abandoning the faith of their fathers, no longer paid homage to the protecting divinities of the Empire. This was the accusation under which perished, at the expiration of his term of office as consul, Flavius Clemens, Vespasian's nephew through his father Sabinus, a man who had defended the Capitol against the partisans of Vitellius; nephew, moreover, to Domitian himself, through the emperor's wife Domitilla, and the father of sons whom the emperor had selected as heirs to the imperial dignity. Men at this time were extremely weary of the tyrant; a low, incessant murmur of hopes and of threats surrounded him; conspiracy was in the air. Possibly Clemens or friends of his may have used imprudent language; of this, we have no knowledge; but being accused of impiety,[1] he

[1] Suetonius says (*Dom.*, 15) that this Clemens, a man of notorious incapacity, *contemptissimæ inertiæ*, perished upon the most frivolous charges, *ex tenuissima suspicione*. He was put to death as an atheist, Dion Cassius says (lxvii. 13), an accusation convenient to serve the anger of Domitian, but one which, while indicating clearly that the confidence of Clemens in the gods of the Capitol was shaken, gives us no light upon his new faith. It is not easy to believe that he was a declared Christian. He was killed at the expiration of his term of office, *tantum non in ipso ejus consulatu interemit;* now consuls had to offer sacrifices and fulfil religious functions, which Clemens could not certainly have declined without public scandal of apostacy, which would have caused his death during his consulship. According to the Chevalier Rossi (*Roma sotterranea*, i. 265–267, 319–321, and *Bull. di Arch. Christ.*, May and June, 1865), Clemens was a Christian. In respect to Flavia Domitilla, the virgin martyr mentioned in the *Acts* of Nereus and Achilleus, I share the negative opinion of Aubé, *Hist. des persécutions*, pp. 427 *sq.* It is possible that at the close of the first century Christianity

perished by the sword; his wife, who was probably a Christian, was banished to the island of Pandataria; near Rome, upon the Via Ardeatina, is to be seen a tomb adorned with Christian symbols and bearing his name; his children's fate is not known. Acilius Glabrio, former colleague of Trajan in the consular office, seems to have been the victim of two contradictory accusations: the one, of becoming a Jew, the other, of having fought in the arena and killed an enormous lion. Many more, under the same pretext, were despoiled of their goods.[1] Authentic proofs of a general edict of persecution in the reign of Domitian are not found, any more than of a similar edict in the time of Nero. But, as we have already said, the proconsuls had no need of any such authorization, being sufficiently armed against religious innovations and illegal associations; and we are thus at liberty to admit that there were acts of violence done by them[2] of which the report did not reach Rome, Roman citizens alone having the right to stay the hand of the governors and arrest their *jus necis*[3] by an appeal to the emperor. But these acts certainly were not numerous, and Tertullian reduces the persecutions to a few sentences of exile which were soon repealed.[4] According to the official documents

had made here and there a conquest in the high society of Rome; but I cannot believe that so many of the Flavian house had been won over so few years after S. Paul had said: "Not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called" (1 *Corinth.*, i. 26); and it was especially among the lower classes that the new religion was received. More than a century after Domitian, Tertullian (*ad Uxor.*, ii. 8) wrote: "There are few rich men among us;" and Minucius Felix (*Octav.*, 36): "*Plerique pauperes dicimur.*" Later still S. Jerome says: "*Ecclesia de vili plebecula congregata est.*" See Leblant, *Rev. arch.* of 1880, p. 323. This point is of great importance, for there is a school which, in contradiction to the opinion of the early Fathers, seeks to explain, by secret infiltrations of Christianity into heathen thought, the admirable moral outburst in philosophy and in law during the first and second centuries of the Christian era. We shall later show that Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, Paulus, Ulpian and Papinian are Romans, and nothing else. The writings of the former and the commentaries of the latter are the logical development of ideas that preceded them, and the necessary result of historic circumstances, among which, in the first and second centuries, Christianity cannot be included, not having at that time any influence whatever upon heathen thought.

[1] Dion, lxvii. 14.

[2] In an apology for Christianity presented to Hadrian in the year 126 by Quadratus, bishop of Athens, and Aristides, it is said: . . . . ὅτι δή τινες πονηροὶ ἄνδρες τοὺς ἡμετέρους ἐνοχλεῖν ἐπειρῶντο. (Euseb., *Eccles. Hist.*, iv. 3.)

[3] Dion, liii. 14.

[4] *Tentaverat et Domitianus, portio Neronis de crudelitate; sed qua et homo, facile cœptum repressit, restitutis etiam quos relegaverat* (*Apol.*, 5). If Tertullian had believed that the highest person in the State, after the emperor, a nephew of Domitian and a consul, had been

which have come down to us Trajan was the first to legalize the condemnation of the Christians.

Meanwhile, say subsequent authors, all nature foreboded the tyrant's approaching end. Lightning tore off the inscription from his triumphal statue and struck the temple of the Flavians. A tree with which the emperor's destiny was in some way connected fell to the ground with a great noise. The Fortune of Præneste made alarming responses and spoke of blood. A soothsayer in the army of Germany predicted a revolution for the 14th before the Calends of October, and Domitian himself announced that on that day the moon would be the colour of blood. It is singular to remark the connection of frivolous causes and terrible events. Let the public mind become excited and immediately credulity and alarm multiply omens of evil. These omens in turn, appearing to reveal the future, excite to action those who hesitate, and who are helped to decide by the conviction that heaven is their accomplice. The day, so much dreaded by Domitian, was looked forward to by conspirators in the palace and at the very door of the emperor's apartment.

Symbolic Vine, painted upon a Vault in the Tomb of Domitilla.[1]

"The tyrant," says Juvenal, "who had with impunity robbed the State of so many illustrious citizens, whom no man ventured

put to death for the Christian faith he would not have used language like this. Eusebius (*H. E.*, iii. 18) does not know about the martyrdom of Clemens, although he mentions the banishment of Domitilla. However, the crime of "judaizing" must date from Domitian's reign, for the *cognitiones de christianis* mentioned by Pliny in his letter to Trajan can only refer to prosecutions under that emperor.

[1] Vines loaded with clusters of grapes represent the Church, "the Lord's vine." It was a symbol much employed by the early Christians.

to avenge, perished when he became dreaded by the cobbler. Upon this shoal was shipwrecked the monster dripping with the blood of the Lamias."[1] A servant of Domitilla, who had lately been proscribed, undertook to kill the emperor. To turn away suspicion, Stephanus[2] feigned to have a wound in the left hand and wore a bandage about it for several days. The moment having come, he concealed a dagger in the wrappings, and sought an audience of the emperor to reveal to him a conspiracy. While the emperor was reading the letter which contained details, Stephanus plunged a dagger into his abdomen. The emperor, but slightly wounded, struggled with Stephanus, but some of the imperial attendants rushing in, despatched their master, who received seven dagger thrusts.

"The young slave who had charge of the altar of the Lares in the imperial bed-room happened to be there at the moment when the murder was committed. From him we have the story of the scene: on receiving the first wound, Domitian had called out to him to bring the dagger hidden under his pillow and to summon the guards; but the blade of the weapon had been removed, and all the doors were locked. Domitian, however, had thrown Stephanus upon the ground, and though his hands were cut, was striving to tear his weapon from him, or to put out his eyes, when the other assassins coming in, finished him. The emperor was in the forty-fifth year of his age and the fifteenth of his reign. His body, wrapped in a common shroud, was removed during the night by the persons who had charge of burying the lower classes. But Phyllis, his nurse, recovering his body, paid it the last honours in his villa on the Via Latina, and secretly carried the ashes to the Flavian temple" (18th September, 96 A.D.). His statues and trophies were thrown down; his name was effaced on the public buildings,[3] and the senate did not send him to join the Flavian deities already in the skies.

[1] *Postquam cerdonibus esse timendus cœperat* (*Sat.*, iv. *ad finem*).

[2] Suet., *Dom.*, 17.

[3] Upon the copper table which bears, in five columns, the 350 lines of the *lex Malacitana*—or at least on what remains of it—and was engraved under Domitian, that emperor's name has been scratched out, as also upon many others. *In plerisque Domitiani titulis*, says Orelli, *ad* No. 767, *ejus nomen erasum est*; it was, however, retained upon the table of Salpensa. A few statues escaped also. The extent of the Empire, the indifference of the remote towns in respect

In forming a judgment of Domitian, as in the case of Tiberius, if we take our position in Rome among the nobles, we must call him, in his later years, an execrable tyrant. But if we look only at the Empire, he may pass for a firm and vigilant ruler. Like their god Janus, the Roman emperors have a double face, and we must consider them in both aspects. It has been usual to show but one; that one we do not conceal, but we desire to exhibit the other also. The prince of the senate remains, with his informers and his executioners, his hands red with blood; the emperor appears with the traditions of that peace and order which Augustus commenced and Tiberius, Claudius, and Vespasian continued. Domitian remained true to these traditions, but as administrator and as prince he was far behind the gloomy and formidable grandeur of the second Augustus.

to the tragedies which went on at Rome, a grateful recollection of some particular favour, prevented the universal and invariable execution of the decrees proscribing the name and images of emperors declared to be tyrants. The empress Domitia seemed to have survived her husband many years, for an inscription of the year 140 shows one of her freedmen who, after building a temple to her, offers the decuriones of Gabii 15,000 sesterces, of which the income is to be employed in keeping the little building in repair and in celebrating the birthday of his mistress (Orelli, No. 775). In the time of the Thirty Tyrants a general in the service of Aureolus claimed to descend from Domitian, whose name he bore. (Trebellius Pollio, *The Thirty Tyrants*, ii.)

[1] IMP. CAES. DOMIT. AVG. GERM. COS. XVII. CENS. PERP. P., around the laurelled head of the emperor Domitian.

Large Bronze of Domitian.[1]

TENTH PERIOD.

THE ANTONINES (96-180 A.D.).[1]

THE ROMAN PEACE.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

NERVA AND TRAJAN (96-117 A.D.).

I.—Nerva (19th September, 96, to 28th January, 98).[2]

THE eighty-two years which lie between the accession of Tiberius and that of Nerva are divided among ten emperors. Of these five were supplied by the law of hereditary succession, and five by the soldiers' election: to the former, belong Caligula and Nero; to the latter, Claudius and Vitellius; and by their results we may judge the two systems.

In reality they were only superficially different. Whether Otho bought the Empire from the prætorians, or Domitian inherited it from his brother, was of little consequence. The emperor, however created, was sole master, in a country which nevertheless had not suppressed all traces of its free institutions, and in a time when men yet remembered the senate, the people, the comitia,

[1] To the Antonine family we add the Italian, Nerva, who adopted Trajan, and we exclude from it Commodus, who was unworthy of his race.

[2] For the history of Nerva and Trajan we have not even Suetonius, who ends with Domitian's reign, and our principal source is Dion Cassius, or rather his abbreviator, Xiphilinus. We have unfortunately lost the work of a writer who was much esteemed, for the *Script. Hist. Aug.* quotes him twenty-eight times, Marius Maximus, who composed a Life of Trajan. He seems to have designed to continue the *Biographies* of Suetonius, as Amm. Marcellinus proposed to continue the *Histories* of Tacitus.

with their annual and responsible magistrates. Thus the form of authority was contrary to manners and traditions, two great forces which cannot be disregarded; but it appeared to be in accordance with another great force which it was essential to consider, namely, the interests of the people; for in every direction prevailed a vast necessity for peace and public order.

The Roman world, therefore, was occupied with two very different questions: one, the political question, which was agitated in the city, and, unfortunately, also in the camps, most frequently amid bloodshed and violence—that of the accession, maintenance, or dethronement of the master; the other, the economic question, which was the only one in which the provincials interested themselves—the preservation of peace without acts of extortion or violence, the security of the highways and the activity of commerce without insupportably heavy taxes.

Augustus and Vespasian had satisfied this two-fold need; during their reigns Rome had been tranquil, the law of treason had been forgotten, the lictor had been without occupation; and in the army there had been discipline; in the provinces, prosperity; in the State, the exterior forms of liberty. But all these advantages resulted from the wisdom of the two men, and not from institutions, and ended with their lives.

With Nerva an entirely different period begins. Five emperors will reign with honour for eighty-five years, and not one fall by the assassin's dagger. Is it to be inferred that at last those institutions are to be established which we indicated, in Chapter LXXI., as the means of harmonizing that unity of command indispensable to the Empire with the regular participation of the provinces in the government of the State, which alone could prevent the violent shocks of revolutions? Or rather is it only that, by virtue of a first fortunate selection, an unexpected succession of superior men is to take place? Commodus and Caracalla will re-enact Nero and Domitian, as though the Antonines had not for nearly 100 years held the world in their hands. The emperors of that family were, however, the last who could have saved the Empire, harmonizing its present and its past, its needs and its institutions. But while their intentions were honest, and they had a conviction of their duty as chiefs of the State, we find in them no more than in their

Nerva (Statue found at Rome. Museum of the Vatican, Rotunda, No. 548).

predecessors any real political wisdom, for they accelerated that movement of concentration which was to end in destroying all municipal liberties, and, under the best forms, perpetuated that power, unlimited as well as irresponsible, which was to destroy the Empire and bury the civilization of the world under its ruins.

At the same time we shall have occasion to recognize in the Antonines a general plan of conduct, Trajan being its most complete expression. Enlightened by so many disasters, the Antonines will show the greatest consideration for the new aristocracy formed by Vespasian, whose members at this moment fill all the high offices of the State. Without really restoring their power to the nobles, these emperors will seem to govern with and for them.[1] They will make new patricians for the purpose of keeping the ranks full, and in order to have done with the republican Brutus, Marcus Aurelius, instead of proscribing his memory, will extol the nephew of Cato as the most perfect model of Roman virtue. To the modest ambition of the men of that time this will suffice; the aristocracy, which was in a state of permanent conspiracy against the Cæsars, and even against the Flavians, will seldom form plots, and of these not one will succeed; and the senate, believing itself to have finally recovered its right of appointing the chief magistrate, will strike coins bearing the legend: *Libertas restituta*, and Pliny will celebrate "the restoration of liberty."[3]

Public Liberty.[2]

The plot to which Domitian had fallen a victim had numerous ramifications. This appeared as soon as the blow had been struck; all preparations had been made: the Conscript Fathers at once proclaimed an old man of a family which had three or four times enjoyed the consular dignity, Marcus Cocceius Nerva, who had himself received the honours of the triumph.[4]

[1] The younger Pliny bitterly reproaches Domitian with his neglect of the senate: *De ampliando numero gladiatorum aut de instituendo collegio fabrorum consulebamur* (*Paneg.*, 54); and *cum senatus aut ad otium summum aut ad summum nefas vocaretur* (*Epist.*, viii. 14).

[2] *Libertate ab imp. Nerva . . . . restitutæ*, Wilmanns, 64 LIBERTAS PVBLICA SC. Liberty standing, holding a cap and scetpre. Large bronze.

[3] Pliny, *Epist.*, ix. 13.

[4] A Nerva had been consul in the time of the triumvirs and another in 22 A.D., and the

The choice was a singular one. A man of integrity, of good education, of gentle manners, Nerva, notwithstanding his two consulships, had signalized himself neither by great talents nor by eminent services, and there seemed nothing which could have drawn upon him this preference save his sixty-five years,[1] his bad digestion, and his feeble health, which gave ambitious men time to make ready their schemes, secure that they should not have to wait too long a time.

Nerva wearing the Consular Toga (Vatican, Braccio Nuovo, No. 20).

The prætorians murmured, not being sure how this revolution, in which they had had no share, might result, and especially since it had overthrown an emperor to whom they owed a large increase of pay. Nerva went out to the camp, and the promise of a *donativum* pacified them. In the case of the legions on the frontiers, who were entirely indifferent as to the choice of a master, but very responsive to the ruler's liberality, there seems to have been no difficulty whatever, their fidelity being in no way tempted.[2] In the senate a demand was made that all exiles should be allowed to return, and their property, where it was possible, restored to them. This was readily granted; and

new emperor had been twice consul, an honour which one only of his colleagues then living, L. Verginius Rufus, shared with him: but the latter had already refused the imperial power.

[1] Dion says sixty-five; Aurelius Victor sixty-one; Eusebius, Eutropius, and Cassiodorus, seventy-one.

[2] The story of Dion Chrysostomus of a sedition among the legions of the Danube is worthy of no credit.

further, the chastisement of informers was called for, a violent reaction setting in against them.[1] Many were put to death, among others the philosopher Sura; these were insignificant persons, but others, more formidable, were in the senate. We have a letter in which Pliny relates how he attacked a consul-elect, the man who had laid hands upon Helvidius, to pluck him from the Curia and throw him to the lictors. The timid and gentle Nerva moderated this reaction, contenting himself with the removal of the guilty person from the consular office, and the emperor swore publicly that, so long as he should live no senator should be punished with death, an oath which was repeated by all the Antonines in turn. He prohibited accusations of treason and of judaizing,[2] and threatened with severe punishment all informers who should not succeed in proving the charges which they alleged.[3] Despotism relaxes social ties, violating, in its own interests, the discipline of orders and families; Nerva, to restore this discipline, punished with death the slaves who, in Domitian's time, had betrayed their masters and freedmen who had betrayed their patrons; and he renewed the prohibition in respect to their testimony against those to whom they owed respectful fidelity or obedience.

These edicts did not, however, re-assure the father of Herodes Atticus, who found a rich treasure in an old house in Athens. Alarmed by his dread of informers, he hastened to reveal to the emperor what he had found, and to ask what he should do with this gold. "Use it," Nerva replied; but Atticus, who could not believe in the straightforward meaning of words so contrary to imperial usage, again wrote, saying it was too much for him. "Very well, waste it, then," was the response. The good-natured emperor who, in his own elevation, recognized a stroke of fortune, respected in the case of others the decrees of that goddess who had been so favourable to himself.[4]

[1] Pliny, *Epist.*, ix. 13.

[2] Dion, lxviii. 1.

[3] It must not be forgotten that in the absence of any public prosecutor the informer was a social necessity, securing the execution of the laws by accusing those who violated them. The political informer is the person who merits all the odium which is attached to this name. The other informers were recompensed by the law, and were respectable citizens. (*Dig.*, xlviii. 2, 4.)

[4] Later, Hadrian established a rule on the subject of treasure trove, securing half of it to the owner of the property where the treasure was found, and if the proprietor himself found it he was to receive the whole. (Spart., *Hadr.*, 17.)

Domitian had so exhausted the public treasury that Nerva at first suspended the games and the distributions; but the measure proving a dangerous one, before the end of the year he re-established the *frumentationes*.[1] He allowed the return of the buffoons, while diminishing the expense of the games, and he made an attempt to render the combats of the amphitheatre less sanguinary.[2] The founding of colonies for the poorer classes of citizens was a relief for some forms of destitution;[3] and an idea at once charitable and political is revealed in an institution of the year 97, which Trajan and his successors developed, namely, public assistance granted to the children of indigent families.[5] One of his coins shows him seated in the curule chair, and holding out his hand as if in charity to a boy and girl, near whom stands their mother, with this legend: *Tutela Italiæ*.[6] Another commemorates his removal from the Italian cities of their obligation to meet the expenses of the imperial post.

Souvenir of Nerva's *frumentationes*.[4]

Coin commemorative of a Reform in the Postal Service.[7]

Dion (lxviii. 2) well understood the policy of the emperor, and what he says is notable: "Nerva did nothing without the participation of the nobles." Was this, as has been believed, a new form of government? Rather it was the tradition of Augustus which these rulers sought to take up, and there was really no change in the general condition of the Empire.

One Crassus, who asserted himself to be a descendant of the

[1] Eckhel, *Doctr. num.*, vi. 407: *Plebei urbanæ frumento constituto.*

[2] Augustus had already forbidden gladiatorial exhibitions in which the death of one combatant was required.

[3] It is doubtless to this that Dion refers (lxviii. 2): "Nerva gave to the poor citizens of Rome lands to the value of 15,000,000 drachmas, intrusting to the senators the acquisition and distribution of these estates."

[4] PLEBEI VRBANÆ FRVMENTO CONSTITVTO S. C. Modius, with six ears of corn and a poppy. Great bronze.

[5] *Puellas puerosque natos parentibus egentibus sumptu publico per Italiæ oppida ali jussit* (Aurel. Victor. *Epit.*, 12). Henzen (*Tabula alimentaria*, p. 11) relates that Nerva also established a fund to be employed for the funeral expenses of the poor.

[6] Eckhel, *Doctr. num.*, vi. 407.

[7] *Vehiculatione Italiæ remissa.* Two mules feeding. Large bronze.

triumvir, conspired, nevertheless, against this ruler who only sought to be the chief senator, and rather the father than the master of the Empire. Nerva was satisfied to exile him to Tarentum. A prætorian prefect incited the soldiery to demand the death of Domitian's murderers. Nerva, extremely alarmed, trembled and dared not act; he implored the pardon of those whom the prætorians condemned, offered himself in their place as a victim, but was unable to save them, and, the murder being committed, excused the soldiery, imputing the act of violence to an excess of respect for the military oath taken to the son of Vespasian. He even went so far as to humiliate himself before the people by publicly thanking the prætorians for having punished the most wicked of men.

Bust of Nerva.[1]

This act of insubordination was of bad omen; Nerva evidently had not a hand strong enough to govern. History is too apt to ask of a ruler and to admire in him that trivial kindness which yields to every supplication. May it not be possible that with Titus and Nerva it was the same as in the regency of Anne of Austria in France? At that period every man sought his own advantage and acted in accordance with his own wishes; one word was in all men's mouths: "The queen is so good!" Let us beware of over-praising some of those so-called

[1] Marble bust found in Rome, near Trajan's Forum. (Muséo Campana. H. d'Escamps, *op. cit.*, No. 83.)

"good emperors," who were at every man's beck and call; or of over-blaming those whom history calls "bad," who, like the hated Cardinal, required order and obedience without intrigues or plots. Mauricus, who had been banished in the reign of Domitian, was one evening at supper with Nerva, and Veiento, who had been an informer in the late reign, was also present. The conversation fell on Catullus, then dead, but one of the most odious of the informers in Domitian's time. "If he were yet alive," Nerva said, "what would this Catullus be doing now?" "He would be supping with us," Mauricus rejoined.[1] The consul Fronto also said in the emperor's very presence: "It is a great misfortune to live under a rule where all things are forbidden; but it is not less so to live under one where all things are allowed;"[3] and Pliny adds: "The Empire is coming down upon the emperor's head."[4] These men were right: the authority which vacillates and hesitates in using its legitimate rights lets everything grow weak and fall. Government, whatever its name and form, must have for its devise: *Sub lege imperium.* The law commands, *imperat*, and the power charged with executing the law must also command with steady determination; otherwise men lose their respect for the law, and with that all is lost.

Nerva and the Elder Trajan.[2]

In truth, Nerva did but one thing, but that suffices to make his fame: he adopted Trajan. The insubordination of the prætorians together with some disturbances on the Rhine and the Danube decided him in October, 97, to take a colleague, and upon the recommendation of Licinius Sura,[5] he selected the ablest of his generals, "for the purpose of restoring discipline and giving to the State a ruler whom no force could cause to yield."[6] News of victories arrived from Pannonia.[7] Nerva made solemn offerings in

[1] Pliny, *Epist.*, iv. 22.

[2] Reverse of a gold coin of Trajan, bearing the heads of his father and his adoptive father.

[3] Dion, lxviii. 1.

[4] . . . . *Concussa respublica, ruensque imperium super imperatorem* . . . . (*Paneg.*, 6).

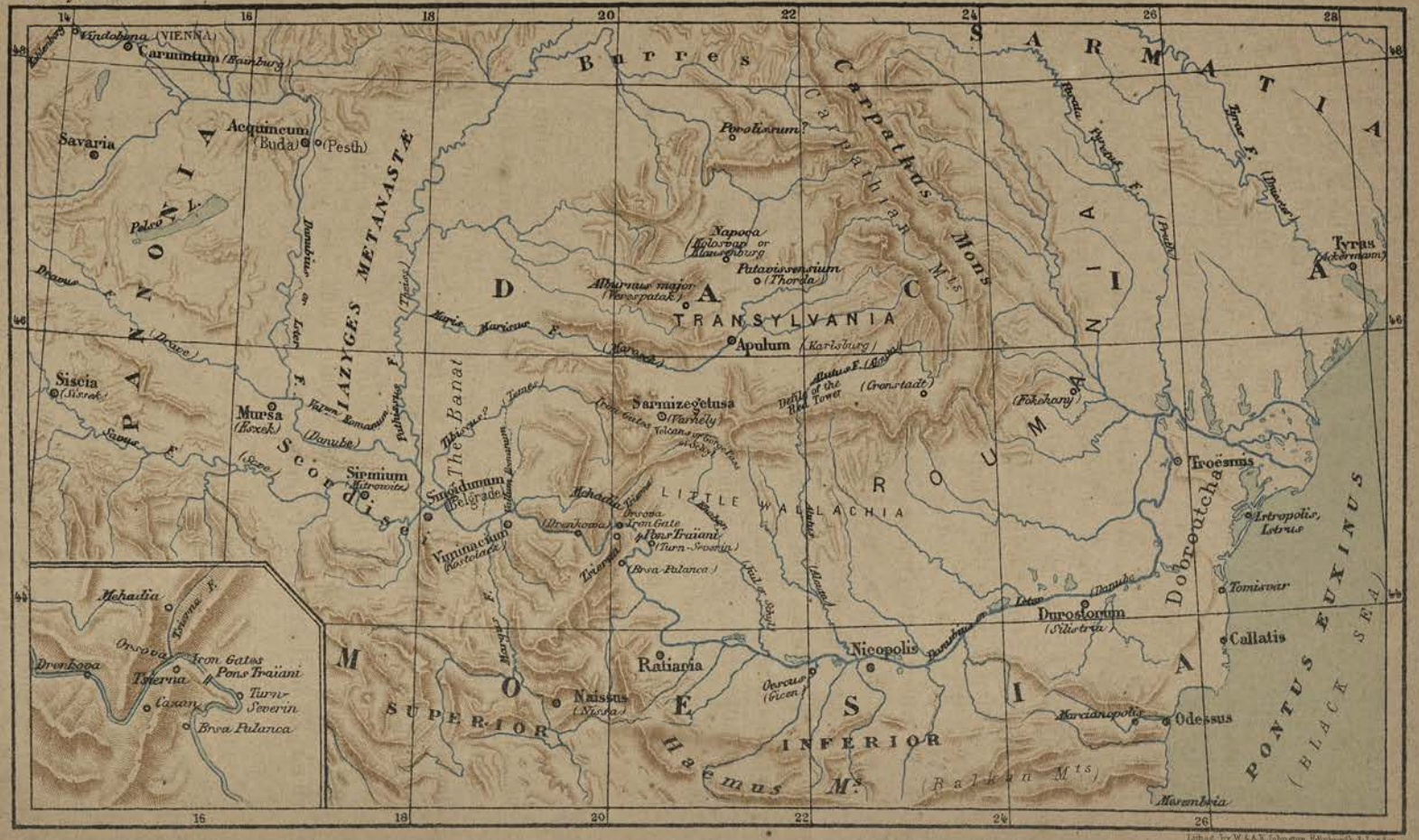
[5] . . . . *Suræ cujus studio imperium arripuerat* (Aur. Victor, *Epit.*, 13). Accordingly, Trajan loaded him with honours, and, in a sense, made him his colleague. Three months after this Nerva died.

[6] *Principem qui cogi non posset* (Pliny, *Paneg.*, 6).

[7] These were successes gained over the Suevi, upon which Nerva assumed the surname of Germanicus, transmitting it to Trajan on the latter's adoption.

MAP FOR TRAJAN'S CAMPAIGNS IN DACIA.

History of Rome



Lithog. by W. & A.K. Johnston, Edinburgh & London.

the Capitol, and taking gods and men to witness, adopted Trajan as his son.[1]

II.—Trajan (98–117); Dacian War.

Spain had already sent to Rome a whole colony of literary and scientific men, of poets and philosophers;[2] she was now about to furnish the State with its first provincial emperor.[3] Trajan (M. Ulpius Trajanus) was born September 18th, 52 A.D., at Italica, on the Bætis, one of the earliest transmarine colonies of Rome, founded by Scipio Africanus during the second Punic War. He had made his first campaigns under his father, a meritorious officer who had obtained all the military and civil honours: the consulship, the government of Syria, the *triumphalia ornamenta*, and lastly, in 79, the proconsular office in the province of Asia. Trajan himself served ten years as military tribune in Syria and upon the Rhine, was prætor about the year 85, had command of a legion in Spain, was consul in 91, and then governor of Upper Germany; he was brave, skilful, and popular with the army, notwithstanding his firmness, for the reason that his discipline, though severe, was always just. In camp he lived with great simplicity, sharing in the soldiers' hardships, and taking part in all their exercises; on a campaign he gave up his horses to be used for transport and marched with the troops, bearing the same fatigues, and ever the last man to come under shelter. Finally, he had that faculty of great generals, so fascinating to the soldier, of being able to call by name his officers to the very humblest, and all who had been wounded or had received decorations. Accordingly, on news of his elevation all the armies sent to congratulate him, a compliment

[1] 28th January, 98 A.D. He had reigned six months and nine days. There was an irregularity in this adoption, namely, the absence of the person adopted, whose consent was necessary. We may observe that the first year of Trajan's *tribunicia potestas* dates from the 27th of October, 97, the day of his adoption, and the second begins January 1st, 98. The usage of dating the second tribuneship from the first new year's day following the accession of the emperor was observed by his successors—a detail of importance in establishing the imperial chronology.

[2] See above, pp. 488-9. Herennius Senecio, the friend of Pliny, and one of Domitian's victims, was born in Bætica; Licinius Sura was also of Spanish birth.

[3] Dion says (lxviii. 4) that Nerva adopted Trajan, although the latter was a Spaniard: *ἐπειδὴ μηδεὶς πρόσθεν ἀλλοεθνὴς τὸ τῶν Ῥωμαίων κράτος ἐσχήκει.* Italica was situated on the right bank of the Guadalquivir, at Santiponce, six miles from Seville. (*C. I. L.*, vol. ii. p. 145.)

whose sincerity cannot in this case be doubted, for this unexpected choice was both an honour to themselves and a hope to all military leaders.

Three months later Trajan received at Cologne the senate's envoys, who brought him news of the emperor's death; he replied in a letter at once modest and dignified, in which he renewed the pledge given by Nerva that he would never subject a senator to

Ruins at Italica.

the capital penalty:[1] a singular promise, but explicable by the history of preceding reigns; furthermore indicating that, like the late emperor, Trajan would transfer the government from the palace to the Curia. He was at this time forty-six years of age.

As a proof of his confidence in the senate, he left that assembly and the consuls in charge of the government while he himself remained upon the Rhine, occupied in completing the great works begun by Domitian. It would seem that, already seized with the desire to restore the splendour of the Roman arms,

[1] Ὡς οὐδένα ἄνδρα ἀγαθὸν ἀποσφάξοι ἢ ἀτιμάσοι (Dion, lxviii. 5).

and seeing nothing important to do upon this frontier, he conceived the idea of establishing there an impregnable line of defence, so that he might not fear a diversion from this quarter while occupied elsewhere.[1] We have no details as regards these works, but we are assured that Trajan had made good use of the three years spent by him in that country as governor, and that he employed still more profitably a fourth year, that in which he was adopted, and that it was his successors' task rather to maintain than to continue the vast entrenchments in the *agri decumates*. Behind this line of defence he had established numerous military posts to augment its strength;[2] on the north to replace the ruined camp, Vetera Castra, on the left bank of the river, Colonia Trajana (Kelln or Cleves), the garrison of which commanded the Lower Rhine; on the south he founded Aquæ (Baden-Baden), within reach of the defiles of the Black Forest; in the centre, at Mayence, facing the great entrance way from Gaul into Germany, he threw a permanent bridge over the Rhine, which a good road of 10,000. paces connected with a fortress constructed near Hochst at the junction of the Main and the Nidda, which fortress Julian was so fortunate as to find available 300 years later for purposes of defence against the Alemanni.[3] Possibly we ought to place at this period the expedition of Vestritius Spurinna, legate in Lower Germany, who peacefully established a king of the Bructeri in his possessions.[4] Tacitus, with his customary exaggeration, had represented this people as annihilated.[5] After their defeat the Chamavi and Angrivarii having established themselves in great force in the territory of the Bructeri, the Romans considered them dangerous neighbours,

Trajan.

[1] The *Germania* of Tacitus, composed in the year 98, shows that the Roman people were much interested at that time in those nations, and that their strength and character were well understood. The elder Pliny had already published on this subject a work in twenty books, under the title, *Wars in Germany*.

[2] *Urbes trans Rhenum in Germania reparavit* (Eutropius, viii. 2). See above, pp. 704 *sq.*

[3] *Munimentum Trajani*, ten miles from Mayence (Amm. Marcellinus, xvii. 1). In respect to the bridge, it is probable that remains of piles still existing were the work of Charlemagne rather than of Trajan. Cf. the *Trajan* of Dierauer, p. 32, No. 1, in the *Untersuchungen* of Budinger, 1868.

[4] Pliny, *Epist.*, ii, 17.

[5] *Penitus excisis.* Possibly the two events related, one by Tacitus, the defeat of the Bructeri, the other by Pliny, the restoration of their king, may have been contemporaneous.

and aided the latter in reconstituting their national existence under a native king, relying upon their feebleness to retain them in

Trajan (Bust of the Vatican, Braccio Nuovo, No. 48).

a state of dependence. Thus, upon the Lower Rhine, peace was secured, and the influence of Rome reached as far as the Weser.[1]

From the banks of the Rhine Trajan had announced to all the Empire by an act of firmness the commencement of a strong

[1] The fortifications established by Domitian and Trajan upon this frontier made it possible to diminish the force which guarded it. Augustus had had eight legions there (Tac., *Ann.*, iv. 5); in the second century there were but four. (Borghesi, iv. 217 and 265.)

administration. Nerva had sent him his ring and this line of Homer:

Τίσειαν Δαναοὶ ἐμὰ δάκρυα σοῖσι βέλεσσιν.[1]

"May thy arrows, O Apollo, cause the Danai to expiate my tears." These Danai were to the feeble old man the authors of the late sedition. Trajan sent for them, degraded some, banished others, and punished the rest with death. All men perceived that henceforth obedience was necessary; but it soon became evident that it was obedience to law, and not to the single will of a cruel or capricious master.

To remain so long upon the frontier was a manifestation of great indifference in respect to the pomps of Rome. But, in a military monarchy, this conduct was extremely politic, and it completed Trajan's conquest of the soldiers' good will. When he finally set out for the capital, in the latter half of the year 99, the soldiers who composed his escort gave cause for no complaints along the route; it was like the modest suite of a general. This moderation was in good taste and of good omen; when, however, he caused to be set up, side by side, the statement of his expenses in this journey, and that of one of Domitian's journeys, he seems ungenerous towards a dead emperor who, by the bestowal of honours and military commands, had prepared the way for his present fortune.[2] At Rome, for his arrival, there was no pomp or show, but only the immense concourse of people, contemplating with delighted surprise this emperor who made his first entry into his capital on foot, this veteran of the camps who was affable towards citizens, this valiant captain of lofty stature and martial air, who testified respect for civil merit and for age. The Empress Plotina, a woman of austere

PLOTINA AVG. IMP. TRAIANI
(Large Bronze).

[1] *Iliad*, i. 42.

[2] I should not criticize this act of self-laudation, which was, after all, legitimate, had not Trajan thereby given the tone to the court society, showing that he did not design to protect the memory of Domitian. In an hereditary monarchy, the son upon the throne is the natural defender of his father's memory. In the Roman Empire it happened rarely that he who inherited the crown had any interest in protecting his predecessor against partisan calumny, or even the customary court scandals.

virtues,[1] of whom the Greeks, quite inappropriately, made a new Venus,[2] was unwilling to have the state of courts continued about her. As she ascended the steps of the palace she turned to the multitude to say: "Such I enter here, and such I desire to come out;" and she kept her word. Nerva had inscribed over the imperial residence: "Public Palace," and, as in the time of Augustus, all the citizens were admitted to it. Trajan did the same; besides, an old custom required that the door of the sovereign pontiff should never be closed. He gave orders to have the jewels and rarities which decorated the palace carried into the temples, which at that time served as museums. "Whatever was brilliant in the dwelling of the prince," says Martial,[3] "has been given to the gods; every one will behold it." He was blamed for diminishing the respect due to princes by permitting too great familiarity. His answer was: "I shall be towards others as I should have wished, when I was a mere private citizen, that emperors should be towards me." In the prayer annually addressed to the gods that his reign might be prolonged he caused this clause to be inserted: "So long as he shall deserve it;" and in the public acts he placed his own

Bust of Plotina.[4]

[1] *Plotina, incredibile dictu est, quanto auxerit gloriam Trajani* (Aur. Victor, *Epit.*, xiv.). Cf. Pliny, *Panegyr.*, 83, and *Epist.*, ix. 28.

[2] Ἀφροδίτη θεὰ νεωτέρα. *Bull. de corr. hell.*, vol. vi. p. 398.

[3] *Epigr.*, xii. 15.

[4] Found on Mount Cœlius (Vatican Museum).

name after the senate and the people.[1] Following the example of Augustus, he visited his old friends familiarly, attended their family festivals and joined in their pleasures, supping, walking out or joining in the chase with them. One day they sought to awaken his suspicions against a senator; he went, without a guard,

Remains of the Public Palace.

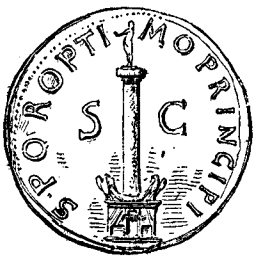
and dined with him, and the next day said to the accusers: "If he had wished to kill me he would have done so yesterday."

The Cæsars and the Flavii, with exception of the head of the second family, were all men of letters, orators or poets, more or less successful—at least, all had attempted to write. Trajan, who made his first campaign at fourteen, had been able to escape from the baleful education of the period, from those rhetoricians who corrupted the taste of their pupils and sometimes their good sense. He had that experience of affairs and of life which is so needful

[1] Pliny, *Panegyr.*, 67 and 72.

to train men of command; and as he had a straightforward mind and an honest heart, he did not manifest any base jealousy against those who possessed the gifts which nature or circumstances had denied him.[1] In the deference shown by this valiant man of war to the senate there was of course a political purpose; there may also be seen in it, as it appears to me, the involuntary respect of the rough soldier to the charm of patrician elegance.

This conduct of a prince who seemed "to conciliate two things hitherto contrary, power and liberty,"[2] won for him the Fathers as much as did his oath, renewed at Rome, to put no one to death.



Senatorial Coin.[3]

As guarantee of this promise he had the corrupt delators who still survived seized and delivered over, in the amphitheatre, to insult and mockery, and then transported them to the islands. Several measures of public utility, to be mentioned further on, an ardent zeal for the welfare of the people and respect for the old families,[4] favours which he granted to the young nobility,[5] and especially the custom he assumed and maintained of letting the senate talk much[6] and act but little, assured to him the affection of the upper assembly, which, near the end of his reign, testified its gratitude by decreeing to him the title of *Optimus*, which they had hitherto bestowed only upon Jupiter.

[1] Παιδείας μὲν ἀκριβοῦς, ὅση ἐν λόγοις, οὐ μετέσχε (Dion, lxviii. 7). *Quamvis ipse parcæ esset scientiæ, moderateque eloquens* (Aur. Victor, *Epit.*, xiii.).

[2] *Res olim dissociabiles miscuerat, principatum et libertatem* (Tac., *Agric.*, 3). The words of Tacitus were applied to Nerva, but are more applicable to Trajan.

[3] The title of *optimus princeps* is seen on the coins from the year 106, but only in 116 the word *Optimus* as a surname. The coin given represents the column of Trajan, and has for its legend: S. P. Q. R. OPTIMO PRINCIPI; great bronze.

[4] He made a re-issue of coins (Dion, lxviii. 15), but at the same time preserving many of ancient type to flatter the pride of the old houses. Among the medals recast at that time we have those of forty-three families of the epoch of the Republic; it was as if the aristocracy of ancient Rome were again brought to light. (Cf. Borghesi, *Œuvres compl.*, i. 215). Eckhel thinks that he also had all the consular denarii recast, *per renovare la memoria dell' antiche famiglie romane*, says L. Pizzamiglia (*Storia della mon. rom.*, p. 203, 1867). There was also in this re-issue a consideration of economy, the new pieces having more alloy than the old. The alloy, which from Nero to Nerva had been, for silver denarii, from five to ten per cent., was increased to twenty per cent. Cf. Mommsen, *Gesch. des röm. Münzwesens*, pp. 754-758.

[5] *Festinatis honoribus* . . . . (Pliny, *Panegyr.*, 69).

[6] Pliny speaks of discourses of five and even of seven hours' length which he pronounced there, and of three entire days occupied with a single suit.

As to the people, they were carried away with the novelty of this citizen prince, who went on foot in the streets amid the crowd, sometimes in a litter with his friends, and not always in the first place. Besides, behind Trajan they saw the devoted legions; these, indeed, not displeased at perceiving that a firm hand was leading them, had accepted without a murmur at the hands of the new emperor one-half of the ordinary *donativum*, and from this general now in the prime of life they anticipated campaigns, victories, and spoils.

"In fact," exclaims Pliny, "instead of being eclipsed by the prince, the nobility gained new lustre from him: Cæsar neither fears nor dismays the descendants of the heroes, these last sons of liberty. If there is anywhere a remnant of an ancient lineage, a fragment of an old illustrious family, he seeks it out, and infuses new life into it; it is an additional force which he gives to the Republic. Great names are held in honour."[1]

Trajan only made a sojourn of less than two years at Rome, from which place he set out for the Dacian war. The Empire might then on the Danube, as many times on the Rhine, have profited by its last success to renounce an embarrassing war which led to adventures and not to security; but Trajan was not the man to be content with this reserved attitude. Bred in camps he had their customs: he was fond of military exercises, the chase, wine, boon companions.[2] He was especially fond of war, even with its hardest privations: he made war successfully, and consequently took delight in making it. He did not ask whether the policy of Augustus for the frontiers was the best; whether a strong defensive position was not better than the gigantic plan of penetrating to the Indies and returning to Italy through the midst of subjugated barbarians. This soldier felt bored at Rome.[3] While the senate was wearying him with its adulations and Pliny by his

[1] *Panegyr.*, 69. [This discourse should not be accepted as historical evidence without caution.—*Ed.*]

[2] . . . . Περὶ μειράκια καὶ περὶ οἶνον ἐσπουδάκει (Dion, lxviii. 7). Aurel. Victor assures us that he was obliged to give orders that the commands which he gave after his protracted banquets should not be put into execution. Yet we have seen above (p. 743) that he had, in case of need, the sobriety of a true soldier. There is still visible, on the Arch of Constantine, at Rome, a wild-boar hunt by Trajan (Rossini, *Gli Archi trionfali*, tav. 69).

[3] Out of twenty years of reigning he passed eight or nine away from Rome.

verbose elegance,[1] he was dreaming of Cæsar and Alexander, and seeking a pretext for war; and as it was an easy thing to find, he caused his orators to say that the disgrace inflicted upon the Empire under Domitian, on the borders of the Danube, ought to be wiped out.[2]

We may conclude from some words of Pliny that during the winter of the first year of his principate, which he passed away from Rome,[3] Trajan visited the legions of Pannonia and Mœsia, to respond to their felicitations, to inspect this frontier and the camps on the banks of the Danube, to gain some account of the power of the peoples on the opposite bank, and perhaps to begin the great works which were executed in that quarter during his reign. Under Domitian and under Nerva there had been a great deal of disturbance there.[4] Disastrous engagements and doubtful victories had been witnessed there. Since the Rhine and the Upper Danube had been pacified, Trajan considered that he ought to pacify the Lower Danube also. He was right in turning his arms in this direction, for it is there that the greatest danger in the future will be and there that invasions will commence.

The deep valley of the Danube is inclosed between two parallel chains of mountains—the Balkans and the Carpathians. But while the first fall away to the Black Sea, the second turn abruptly between Cronstadt and Fokchany towards the west, forming the great bend in which Transylvania is to-day included, and then descend again southerly to the Danube, which they overlook with their steep masses for an extent of more than thirty leagues. In front of these masses which separate the plain of Banat (valley

[1] Every phrase of the *Panegyric* is carefully wrought out and may be taken, apart from the bad taste of some of it, for what constitutes Latin *elegance*; but there are few literary works so tedious as this long and chilling amplification. Trajan was perhaps condemned to read it; happily he did not understand it. Pliny developed into a volume the senatorial harangue which he addressed to the emperor on accepting the consulate in the autumn of the year 100, that is to say, at a time when Trajan had as yet done nothing. When one sees what eulogiums an exceedingly honest man like Pliny is able to lavish upon a prince so soon after his accession, one can comprehend what others did, and can say that it must have required pretty strong heads to have resisted the intoxication which these flatterers poured forth.

[2] Dion well says: τοῖς τε χρήμασιν, ἃ κατ' ἔτος ἐλάμβανον βαρυνόμενος (lxviii. 6), but we have seen (p. 713) to what it was necessary to reduce this tribute.

[3] *Panegyr.*, 12 and 16, or at least before the autumn of the year 100, the time of the compilation of the panegyric.

[4] See on this point p. 703.

Reefs of the Danube.

of the Temes) from the immense Wallachian plain, the Balkans send out on the right bank mighty undulations of land which rise on the bank of the river to the height of 2,000 or 3,000 feet, and by their lower strata cross the bed of the Danube, which they fill with dangerous reefs. This is the celebrated pass called the Iron Gate, which begins at Drenkova and terminates near Orsova. The majestic river, confined in this narrow gorge, which does not measure at Cazan 650 feet in width, rushes angrily along, white with foam; a violent wind raises in that defile such waves as are unknown to rivers generally, and in the shallow waters it requires the most skilful pilot and the firmest hand at the wheel to keep in the channels formed by the ledges at the bottom.[1] Nature is there magnificent, imposing, and bold. Man, too, was great there, for Trajan chained this river by a bridge which the moderns have not yet dared to reconstruct,[2] and this mountain, which on the left bank descends perpendicularly into the angry waves, he cut into to hollow out in its flank a road which his soldiers could follow at all times. One may read still, cut in the cliff, these words of an inscription: "He opened a way across the vanquished river and mountain."[3]

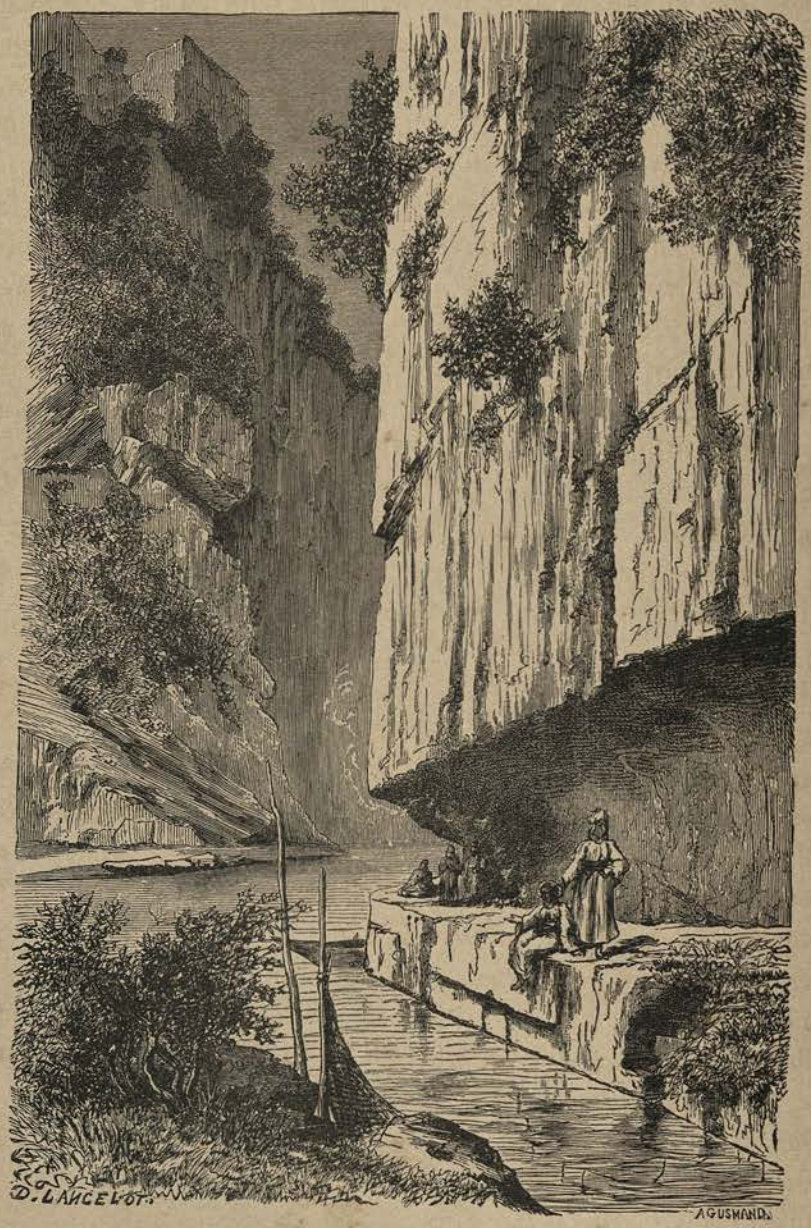
The inscription is of the year 100. We may, therefore, infer that a part of the work was commenced before the first Dacian war. Aurelius Victor even attributes to Trajan the opening of a military road leading from the Euxine to Gaul. The Romans, those grand builders, certainly did not wait more than a century before recognizing the necessity of passing by a safe route along

[1] At Drenkova a special pilot comes on board with three or four men to hold the wheel. I must say, however, that no peril attends this passage. I have made it, and though I found much to admire, I had, in truth, nothing to fear. We in France are only acquainted with the valley of the Rhine; that of the Danube is far superior to it in picturesque beauty or grandeur, the Falls of Schaffhausen excepted. [This is quite true, and applies even to the upper Danube from Passau onward.—*Ed.*]

[2] The last bridge which one meets in descending the Danube is that which was built between Buda and Pesth thirty or forty years ago.

[3] . . . . *Montis et fluvii anfractibus superatis, viam patefecit;* several words being partly effaced, Mommsen reads the last part of the inscription thus: *montibus excisis, amnibus superatis, viam fecit* (*C.I.L.*, vol. iii. No. 1,699). The road cut in the cliff still exists. In descending the Danube one follows it for several miles. From the middle of the river it appears like a line drawn on the side of the mountain; it is, in fact, but a groove made, a few feet above the deep waters, only five feet wide at the base. Its width was, however, doubled by a wooden platform which projected over the water. There are also to be seen, on the right bank of the Alouta, remains of a Roman road which the Wallachians call *Calea Trajanului.*

the border of the great river which protected their Empire over an extent of 600 leagues, and, as has frequently been the case,



Trajan's Road at Orsova.

the work of several generations has been placed to the account of the prince who had left upon this frontier the most glorious memory.[1]

[1] Near the Servian village of Horum, opposite Kozlamare, in the province of Banat, one reads an inscription on a cliff of the right bank of the Danube, belonging to the year 33 or 34,

The importance of the military preparations corresponded to the greatness of the works undertaken to furnish to the army a solid base of operations. From Vienna, at the foot of the Kahlenberg, to Troësmis, in Dobrutcha, eight legions guarded the country of the Pannonians and Mœsia. Five left their cantonments and were united, in the year 101, on the borders of the Save, which carried the heavy baggage down to the Danube, near the places we have just described, towards Viminacium (Costolatz). Trajan came and joined them with the ten prætorian cohorts and the Batavian and Moorish cavalry. It was not too great a force to combat a brave people and a skilful chief, of whom history would have made a hero had it known him better.[1]

The Dacians occupied the two sides of the huge promontory which the Carpathians project upon the Danube: to the west, the valley of the Temes or the province of Banat; on the east, the Wallachian plain; but the centre of their power, their capital and their fortresses, were more to the north, in the upper valley of the Marosch (Transylvania).[2] It was there that decisive blows must be struck. The locality could be reached by three routes: one to the west, across Banat, going over the secondary chain which separates the basins of the Temes and the Marosch by the pass also called the Iron Gate; the others, to the east, by Little Wallachia, ascending the two valleys which lead to two open gorges in the principal chain, that of Jiul (Schyl), ending at the pass of Volcan, and that of Alouta, which, starting in Transylvania, traverses the great chain at the famous defile of the Red Tower (*Rother Thurmpass*), to the south of Hermannstadt. These openings both lead to the neighbourhood of *Sarmizegethusa* (Varhely).

Mars Gradivus.[3]

In the first war, Trajan followed, at least with his main army,

and consequently to the reign of Tiberius, which proves that at this epoch two legions were occupied in constructing a military road along the river. (Griselini, *Gesch. des Temesw. Banat*, i. p. 287, and *C.I.L.*, vol. iii. No. 1,598.)

[1] See pp. 711–12.

[2] *Montibus suis inhærent* (Florus, iv. 12).

[3] Cohen, No. 135. According to the highly probable opinion of M. de Longpérier, the coins which bear on the reverse the image of Mars Gradivus marked the departure of a military expedition. (*Rev. Num.*, 1865, p. 402.)

the route to Banat, which least separated him from his reserves which were in Pannonia; for the second, he seems to have preferred the other routes; in both cases he marched with one of his flanks covered by the mountains, and hence always near strong positions to hold against a sudden attack.

The Iron Gate (after the Column of Trajan).[1]

A bridge of boats, thrown across near the present hamlet of Grodichte, allows him to march out into the plains of the Temes. The army advanced right on by the route which is yet traced on the map of Peutinger, crossed the *Eiserne Thor* (Iron Gate), and turning to the east arrived before the principal stronghold of the Dacians, *Sarmizegethusa* (Varhely). This place was captured with the spoils which several generations had collected there. The Burri, a people who had settled in the upper valley of the Theiss, attempted to interpose in favour of the Dacians; their message was written in Latin characters on a huge mushroom, or rather on a buckler. Trajan paid no heed to a menace which came from a people of so little account; he pushed the enemy vigorously beyond the Marosch and crushed them in a great battle. The Dacians acknowledged their defeat; they gave up their arms, the deserters, the eagle captured from Fuscus, levelled their fortresses, and agreed to regard the friends of the Roman people as allies and their adversaries as

Coin commemorative of the Destruction of the Bridge of Boats.[2]

[1] Fröhner, *la Col. Traj.*, pl. 42, and Bartoli, *Col. Trajana* (Roma, 1672), pl. 35.

[2] DANVVIVS COS. V. PP. S. P. Q. R. OPTIMO PRINC. The Danube crowned with reeds, the right arm extended, the left arm resting on an urn. Silver coin.

enemies. Decebalus himself came forward and accepted these hard conditions. His capital received a Roman garrison, which was connected by a line of fortified posts with the camps on the Danube. The expedition had required two campaigns (101–102), and three serious engagements, for Trajan was three times saluted *imperator* by his soldiers.

The Bridge of the Danube (Great Bronze; Cohen, No. 419).

He re-entered Rome in triumph, with the surname of Dacicus, and paid for his welcome by two favours about equally agreeable to the people; a *congiarium* and the recall of the mimes, against whom he had at first revived the law of Domitian. But the festivities which followed the solemn entry were scarcely ended when ill news arrived from the Danube.[1]

The Bridge of Trajan over the Danube (after the Column of Trajan).

The Dacians had again plucked up courage. They rebuilt their forts, collected arms, formed relations with all the enemies of Rome, and attacked, beyond the Temes, their allies the Iazyges. Trajan returned to the midst of his soldiers in 105,[2] resolved to have done with this people.

The principal attack took place on the east, by the valleys of the Jiul and the Alouta. To move his army easily to this side he ordered the completion, by his architect Apollodorus, of a

[1] At those of the second Dacian triumph in 106 or 107 he gave the people, during 123 days, games in which 10,000 gladiators fought and 11,000 wild beasts were slain. (Dion, lxviii. 15.)

[2] M. des Vergers places the second declaration of war at the end of the year 104. Mommsen and Dierauer make the resumption of hostilities in 105.

bridge begun at the time of the former war,[1] near Turn-Severin, the remains of which still exist at the bottom of the river, where

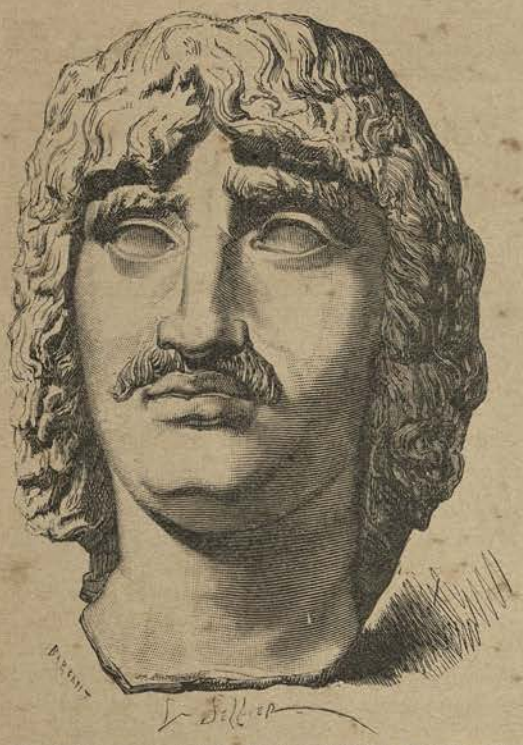
The Danube at the Bridge of Trajan.

have been seen at low water sixteen of the twenty stone piers which had sustained the wooden trusses.[2] The work would be

[1] In our day the construction of a bridge across the Seine requires two seasons; it must have taken much longer for the bridge of Trajan. What are pointed out as the remains of the bridge of Trajan at Gieli are the ruins of fortresses built in the Middle Ages.

[2] In 1858 an Austrian commission made a careful study of these remains. The Roman army was employed in this work; great tiles bearing the names of cohorts have been dredged near the piers. "The ruins of the bridge of Trajan still exist, and during low water the lower courses of the piers, now carried away, are quite visible about six miles below the last cataract of the Iron Gates, thirteen miles down the river from Orsova, and nearly opposite Tourno-Severino. In this part of its course, where the river is reduced to a single branch, rose a bridge of timber-work, whose semi-circular trusses, composed of three courses of arches superposed and fastened with cross-pieces, had nearly 120 feet span, and rested on two abutments and twenty piers of masonry, 177 feet distant from axis to axis, which gave for the span of the bridge, the open and filled spaces included, 3,720 feet. Fortresses guarded each entrance to the bridge. The place of crossing was chosen with rare sagacity away from the cataracts, where the current is tranquil, and where the extent of the plain allows the river to expand in breadth without deepening its channel too much. The greatest depth there is, in low water, only about twenty feet. The bottom is a gravelly sand, solid enough to bear the weight of masonry. The description which Dion Cassius has made of the work bears marks of evident exaggeration. The height of the piers would have been 150 Roman feet, or 156½ feet English, for which there was no occasion; and the arches, in semi-circular masonry, connected, according to his account, piers distant 170 feet from axis to axis, which would be, even in our day, a marvel of construction. The bas-reliefs of the column of Trajan and several bronze medals struck under the reign of Trajan give a complete denial to this description. The arches which are there figured are of timber-work, composed of a triple course of pieces of concentric curve, and whose equidistance is preserved by braces converging towards the arch, an ingenious plan often employed by the moderns, and of which the work of art which gives us the image of it shows the apt dispositions, except in certain details, where the artist has probably altered the forms which the celebrated Apollodorus of Damascus, the architect of

exceedingly difficult even to day: in the time of Trajan it was far more so; hence one cannot too greatly admire the resources of the Empire which undertook it and the genius of the architect who executed it. In this locality the distance between the banks is 1,200 yards;[1] in low water a depth of 20 feet is still found in the channel, and twice as much at the season of high water, and the mean flow exceeds 9,800 yards per second. To build the Pyramids or the Coliseum was a less difficult undertaking.



Decebalus conquered by Trajan (British Museum).[2]

Before the Roman army crossed the bridge Decebalus, feeling apprehensive, attempted to avert the tempest by causing the emperor to be assassinated. This stroke failing, he asked for peace and reimbursement of his war expenses, promising in exchange to give up Cassius, one of Trajan's best generals, who had been treacherously captured. To leave his prince entirely at liberty Cassius took poison. The news of this noble act of devotion heightened the ardour of the Romans; the most difficult obstacles were surmounted, and the enemy, vanquished at every encounter, was dislodged from every stronghold. Decebalus ended his career bravely: at the taking of his last fortress he threw himself upon his sword and his chiefs put themselves to death after him. He had buried his treasure in the bed of the river, the course of which had been turned aside, and put

the column, had given to the bridge of which he was the engineer." (Official report of M. L. Lalanne, president of the European Technical Commission for the Construction of a Bridge over the Danube; December, 1879.)

[1] 3,570 Grecian feet. (Dion, lxviii. 13.) It appears that Apollodorus constructed an artificial island on a shallow in the middle of the river. (Tzetzes, *Chiliades*, ii. v. 67 *sq.*)

[2] *Description of the British Museum*, vol. iii. pl. 6.

to death the captives who had been employed in that work;[1] one of his intimates revealed the secret. This was towards the end of the year 106. Still another brave people, which, after a desperate resistance, has disappeared from history; but it is not utterly dead: Dacian blood yet remains in the inhabitants of Roumania.

The conquest had been achieved. To render it durable Trajan summoned into the region comprised between the Temes and the Alouta (Banat, Transylvania, and Little Wallachia), settlers drawn from all the provinces of the Empire[2] and veterans from all the legions. He there organized two powerful colonies: *Ulpia Trajana* at *Sarmizegetusa*, in the centre of the country, the better to keep it under restraint, and *Tsierna*, in the vicinity of the great bridge, that his legions might always have free entry into the province. He founded two others on the right bank of the Danube: *Œscus* (Gicen) and *Ratiaria*, near Brsa-Palanca; finally, he built, opposite the mouth of the Alouta, the city of Victory, *Nicopolis*, which is still so-called.[4] To these names might be added, if their ruins had yielded them up to us, those of municipia, fortresses and entrenched camps,[5] which were established in order to bring under cultivation this fruitful soil, to work the mines in the Carpathians, and to assure at the same time the obedience of its subjects and their security. In the smiling valley

Dacia, Roman Province.[3]

[1] The Goths did the same for the burial of Alaric.

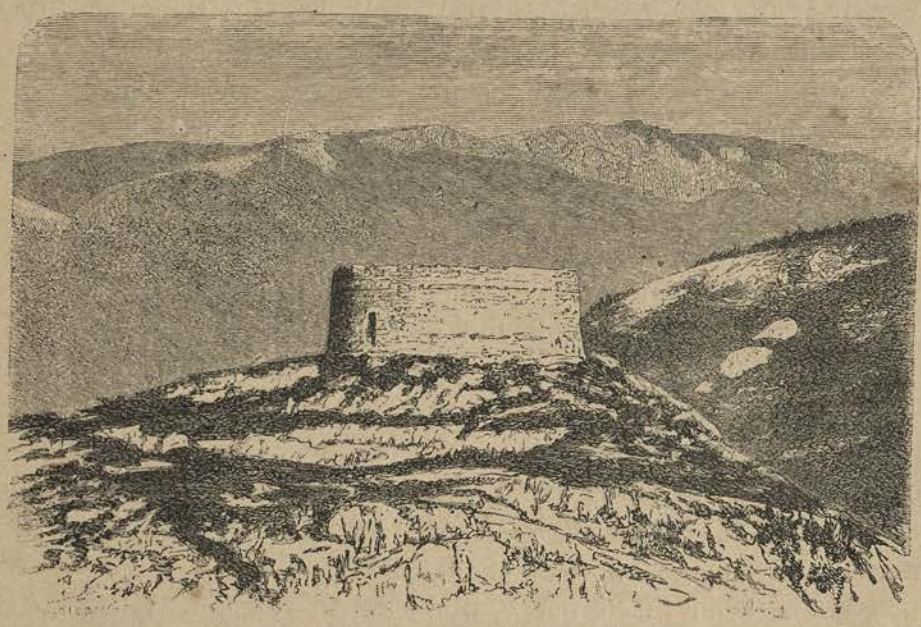
[2] *Ex toto orbe Romano infinitas eo copias hominum transtulerat ad agros et urbes colendas* (Eutropius, viii. 3). The colonists of Latin origin must have been far the most numerous, since their language has remained in the country, and because *Augustales* are to be met there, which are only found in the western provinces. But the inscriptions show Asiatics, Galatians, Carians, etc., at Napoca, Sarmizegetusa, etc. (cf. *C.I.L.*, vol. iii. p. 160, Nos. 859, 860, 870, 882), and Dalmatians at *Alburnus major* (Verespatak), etc. These must have been veterans who were compelled to learn Latin in the service, without renouncing their religious beliefs.

[3] Dacia holding an ensign, and seated on a rock (the Carpathians). The bunch of grapes which one of the children holds is proof that Transylvania had vineyards before the conquest. (Cohen, No. 332.)

[4] *C.I.L.*, vol. iii. Nos. 753, 1,641, and p. 141, and Amm. Marcellinus, xxvii. 4, 12.

[5] See Francke, pp. 158-178, the province of Dacia in the *C.I.L.*, vol. iii. pp. 161-261, and the *Carte de Peutinger*, édit. Desjardins. The municipalities of Dacia were afterwards raised to the rank of colonies: *Napoca* (Kolosvar or Klausenburg), under Antoninus or Marcus Aurelius; *Apulum* (Karlsburg, in the upper valley of the Marosch), perhaps under Marcus Aurelius; *Patavissensium vicus* (Thorda), under Septimius Severus. In Transylvania alone remains of twenty-three camps have been found; Sarmizegetusa, Tsierna, Napoca, and Apulum had at that time or later the *jus Italicum*, that is to say, exemption from taxes. (*Digest*, l. 15, i. §§ 8 and 9.)

of the Czerna, where Trajan certainly tarried when he came to look after the work on the bridge, flow two springs, one sulphurous, the other ferruginous. The Romans made haste to construct at that place the baths of Mehadia, which speedily became famous and are so yet. They consecrated them to Hercules, because these waters restored the strength, and there has been found there an



Roman Tower in Transylvania.

inscription *Hygiæ et Veneri*, the two goddesses of whom, in all times, at watering places, health and pleasure have been implored.

Between these towns the two legions left by Trajan in Dacia[1] built roads measured to the line, like those of the rest of the Empire, and in the interior of cities erected altars, temples, and amphitheatres, some of which date from the first days of the conquest, since at the end of scarcely half a century Antoninus was obliged to rebuild one which was falling from antiquity.[2] Mines of gold were found in the mountains of Transylvania. Trajan organized the working of them by skilled miners summoned from Dalmatia,[3] where they were accustomed to these works,[4] and who

[1] The *XIIIa Gemina* and the *Ia Adjutrix* (*C. I. L.*, vol. iii. No. 1,628).

[2] *Vetustate dilapsum*, at Porolissum (*C. I. L.*, vol. iii. No. 836, in the year 157).

[3] *C. I. L.*, vol. iii. p. 213–14: some inscriptions mention guilds of *auroriorum* and *salariorum*.

[4] Pliny (*Hist. Nat.*, xxxiii. 21) speaks of an auriferous vein discovered in Dalmatia in the time of Nero, which yielded fifty pounds of gold per day.

have left us numerous inscriptions mentioning some of their usages or their contracts.[1]

A brisk commerce soon united to the ancient provinces this barbarian land, where were seen, as in the oldest cities of the Empire, guilds formed by mechanics, societies of foreign tradesmen established in Dacian towns, and even tombs of men from Palmyra[2] or Ituræa. None of the Dacian inscriptions which furnish these details mentions any ancient divinities of the country, but there is a great deal concerning oriental gods, Mithra, Isis, Serapis, Jupiter of Tavium (Galatia), that of Heliopolis (Syria), of the *Bonus Puer* (Phosphorus or the Egyptian Horus), of the Gallic Nehalennia, of the Virgin of Carthage, etc.[3] The current of colonization determined by Trajan and his successors had been so strong that the indigenous population was submerged, and had no power to pierce through the new society which enveloped it and to make it accept some of its gods, as had happened in Gaul after Cæsar's conquest.

It must then be recognized that the Romans, if we leave out of account the populace of Rome, the scum of the universe, had in their decline retained some of their ancient qualities. The colonists of Trajan have assimilated to themselves the ancient population found in all the Wallachian villages, where it may be recognized by the lofty stature, clear complexion, blond hair, and by the calm and leisurely movements of the men of the north, while the descendants of the colonists have preserved the low stature, keen glance, black hair, and the vivacity of the men of the south. Under the Latin influence these elements so diverse blended into a harmonious whole. Dacia became a new Italy, *Tzarea Roumanesca*. In spite of the invasions it has suffered it is still called Roumania: its people are Roman people, and from the banks of the Marosch to those of the Pruth, from the Danube to the summit of the Carpathians, they speak a Latin tongue.[4]

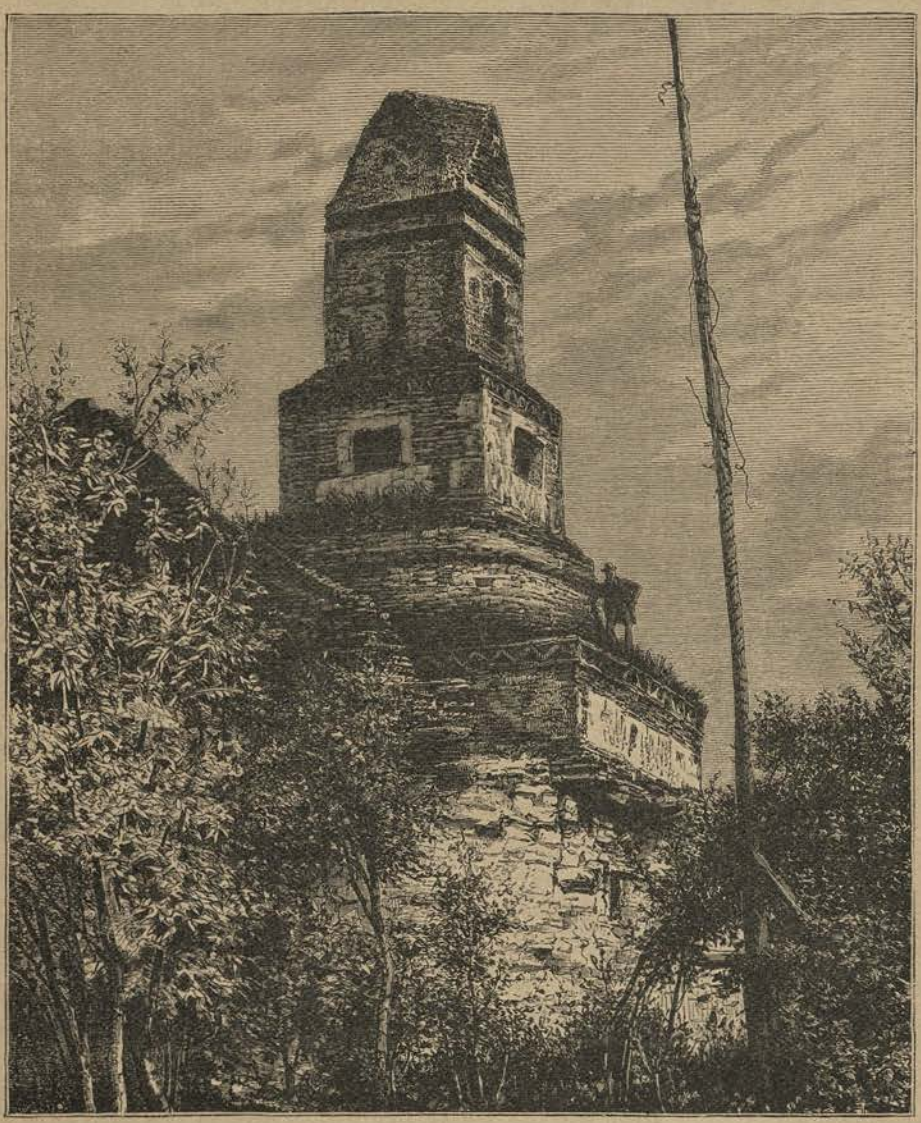
[1] Cf. *C. I. L.*, vol. iii. pp. 921–966: *Instrumenta Dacica in tabulis ceratis conscripta.*

[2] There are also funeral inscriptions of natives of Palmyra in the oases of Algeria. Cf. L. Renier, *Inscr. d'Algérie*, Nos. 1,637, 1,639, etc.

[3] *C. I. L., ibid., passim.* At Aquincum, in Pannonia, an inscription has been found in honour of Baal. (*Musée Epigr. de Pesth*, by M. E. Desjardins.)

[4] A language, at least, of which the foundation is Latin. Thus the Latin has given to the Roumanian only about 1,200 simple words against 2,800 Slavic; but the Latin words are

Bearing in mind the short period which was required to bring about this transformation, one is led to consider this Latinization



Roman Mausoleum in Transylvania.

of Dacia as the greatest achievement in colonization of which history has any knowledge.

We have related nearly all that ancient writers report concerning

generally the essential ones and have more derivatives than the Sclavic words. (*Dict. d'étymol. daco-romane*, de Cihac, 1879.)

this war. One may learn far more from Trajan's column, which is for the military life of the Romans what Pompeii is for their civil life: the faithful representation of things which disappeared 1,800 years ago. The bas-reliefs which unroll in graceful spirals around its white marble shaft reveal to us the arms and costumes of the legionaries and the barbarians, their military engines, their camps, the assaults of strongholds, the passages of rivers, Trajan himself haranguing his troops or bandaging the wounded, and the king of the Dacians throwing himself upon his sword that he might not outlive his people.[1]

The Trajan Column.

This monument of the military glory of Rome, more durable than its Empire, still rears its head aloft in the midst of the *débris* of the Forum which Trajan created by obliterating a slope which descended from the Quirinal towards the Capitol. From an inscription engraved on the pedestal, it was necessary to remove a mass of earth the height of which was equal to that of the column, 128 feet.[2] We cannot give a complete description of this monument, but the

[1] M. Fröhner (*la Colonne Trajane*) has undertaken to reconstruct the history of the Dacian wars with the bas-reliefs of this monument. But, though they are a precious mine for the archæologist, two elements indispensable to the historian are wanting: the indications of time and place which only an inscription could give. As many as 2,500 figures are there enumerated.

[2] . . . . *Ad declarandum quantæ altitudinis mons et locus tantis operibus sit egestus* (Orelli, 29).

nature of this book requires that we should at least reproduce its principal scenes.

The first combat is an infantry engagement at the passage of

Jupiter hurling the Thunderbolt. (Fröhner, pl. 15; Bartoli, pl. 17 and 18.)

a river which the Dacians are defending; they are giving way,

Cavalry delivering the Troops. (Fröhner, 27 and 28; Bartoli, *ibid.*)

terrified by a storm which is indicated by Jupiter casting his thunderbolt.

The following bas-reliefs show the emperor embarking to

succour his troops besieged in their camp and bringing them deliverance. This time the cavalry has the honour of the victory,

Wounded brought in. (Fröh., pl. 31 ; Bart., 28.)

notwithstanding the assistance furnished to the Dacians by the Sarmatians, who are recognized by the absence of the buckler.

But the success is dearly bought, for many soldiers are brought into the field-hospital, where surgeons dress their wounds.

Trajan fortifies his Camps. (Fröh., 29 ; Bart., 29.)

Trajan advances cautiously, marking his route by camps which the legionaries construct, making them strong like fortresses.

By his words and gifts he supports the soldiers' courage.

Trajan bestowing Largesses. (Fröh., 35, 36, 37; Bart., 32.)

A Moorish chief, Lusius Quietus, with his swift horsemen, whose small horses with bushy manes suggest those of Numidia,

Lusius Quietus reconnoitring. (Fröh., 50; Bart., 47.)

pushes his reconnoissances into the forests surrounding the Dacian capital, Sarmizegetusa.

He opens the way for the emperor, who besieges and reduces

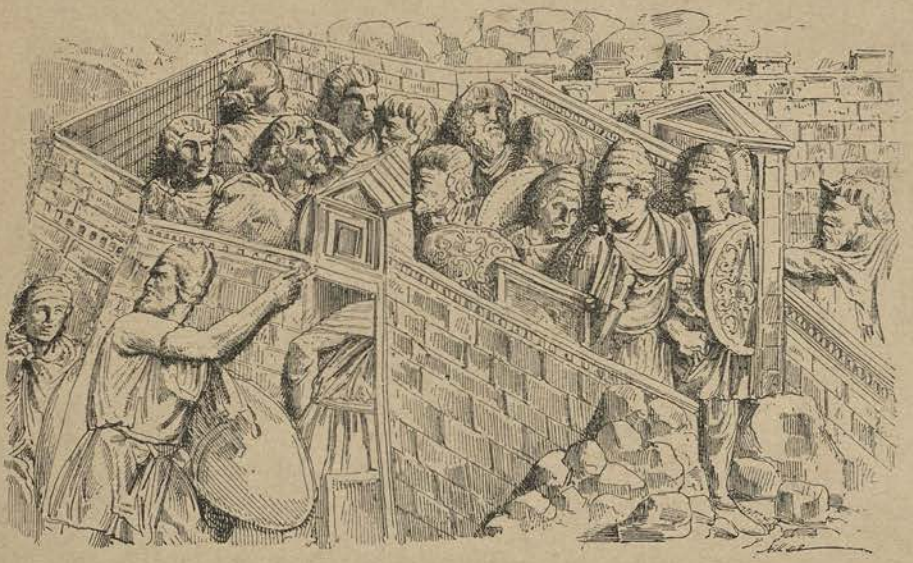
Trajan gives orders to besiege Sarmizegetusa. (Fröh., 56; Bart., 50.)

the city. The conquered Decebalus comes to tender his submission.

The Decebalus makes his Submission. (Fröh., 51; Bart., 54, 55.)

Trajan, upon quitting Dacia, leaves garrisons in fortified

camps; on the breaking out of the second war these camps are besieged; he hastens to deliver them.



Trajan comes to deliver the Camps. (Fröh., 96; Bart., 71.)

He encounters fierce resistance; a severe battle under the

Battle. (Fröh., 94; Bart., 89.)

walls of the new Dacian capital gives it into his power.

But the Decebalus sets it on fire before surrendering it, while

The Decebalus sets his Capital on Fire. (Fröh., 97, 98; Bart., 92, 93.)

his principal chiefs assembled at a banquet drink of a poisoned cup

Dacian Chiefs making their Submission. (Fröh., 100; Bart., 95.)

to escape the disgrace of capitivity. Others, less proud, come and make their submission to the Romans.

The Decebalus, however, did not despair; he again tried the

Suicide of the Decebalus. (Fröh., 116; Bart., 108.)

fortunes of battle; a last defeat decided him to take his own life.

Head of the Decebalus brought to Trajan. (Fröh., 116; Bart., 109.)

His head brought to Trajan and afterwards sent to Rome announced the close of the war.

He leaves behind him some brave comrades, who sell their

Last Combats. (Fröh., 121 ; Bart., 111.)

lives dearly. They were only destroyed by burning the villages in which they had taken shelter.

Burning of the Villages. (Fröh., 123 ; Bart., 112.)

The war had been waged on both sides without mercy. The

report had been circulated in the legions that the Dacians delivered over the Roman captives to their women, that they might put them to death by torture. Trajan's architect had also, upon the column, represented them in the act of slaying the prisoners. In rearing this monument, which has served as a model for all triumphal columns, the Greek Apollodorus has renounced the genius of his race, which would have required idealized art; but he has obeyed that genius of Rome which finds gratification in reality and utility. He has reproduced all the incidents of these two campaigns: the field-works of the soldiers, their weapons, their costume, and that of their adversaries; one beholds there even the medical service of the legion in operation. But let us not complain at this: in this severe marble epic one may read, not only the Dacian war, but all those which the Romans carried on beyond the Danube and the Rhine.

Dacian Women torturing Roman Prisoners. (Fröh., pl. 36; Bart., 33.)

During the conquests of the prince in the north one of his lieutenants, Cornelius Palma, went forth by the eastern frontier, beyond the ancient limits of the Empire. The great desert which stretches from the Euphrates to the Red Sea, envelopes Syria and Palestine in its billows of sand and with its nomad marauders. On the border of the cultivated lands, and almost under the same meridian, are found the great city of Damascus which the Romans had for some time held in partial dependence, and the four towns of Bostra, Gerasa, Rabbath-Ammon (Philadelphia), and Petra; the latter in the open desert, equally distant from the Red Sea and from the Dead Sea, and on the route of the caravans which went

from the valley of the Euphrates to that of the Nile. It was the residence of the king of the Nabatæans, Zabel, who held command as far as Damascus, but also the haunt of bandits who desolated the rich countries of the Jordan and harassed the caravans. Cornelius Palma took possession of these places in the year 105,[1] reduced the country to a province (*Arabia*), and made of Bostra a colony which served as quarters to the legion IIIa Cyrenaica. Roads were at once laid out and conduits of water established to utilize the mountain torrents and give life to the arid plain. An inscription recently discovered is a complimentary address of the inhabitants of Kanata to the imperial legate who, directly after the capture, had conducted a fountain within their walls.[2] With rulers of such foresight the towns gained life, wealth, and a numerous population; Petra became the centre of a considerable commerce, and we find the nomads, seized with a taste for the arts, decorating their cities with monuments, whose ruins, in the midst of solitudes, astonish and delight the traveller; while many, won by the attraction of the soldier's pay, entered the service of the Empire; the old road-makers undertook to keep them.[5]

A Camel, on a Coin of Bostra.

Coin of Zabel.[3]

Arabia.[4]

III.—Administration.

These conquests, the first especially, produced a great effect at Rome.[6] Since the reign of Augustus the Empire had been augmented

[1] The era of the new province commences on the 22nd of March, 106. (Waddington, *Mél. de num.*, 2e série, p. 162.)

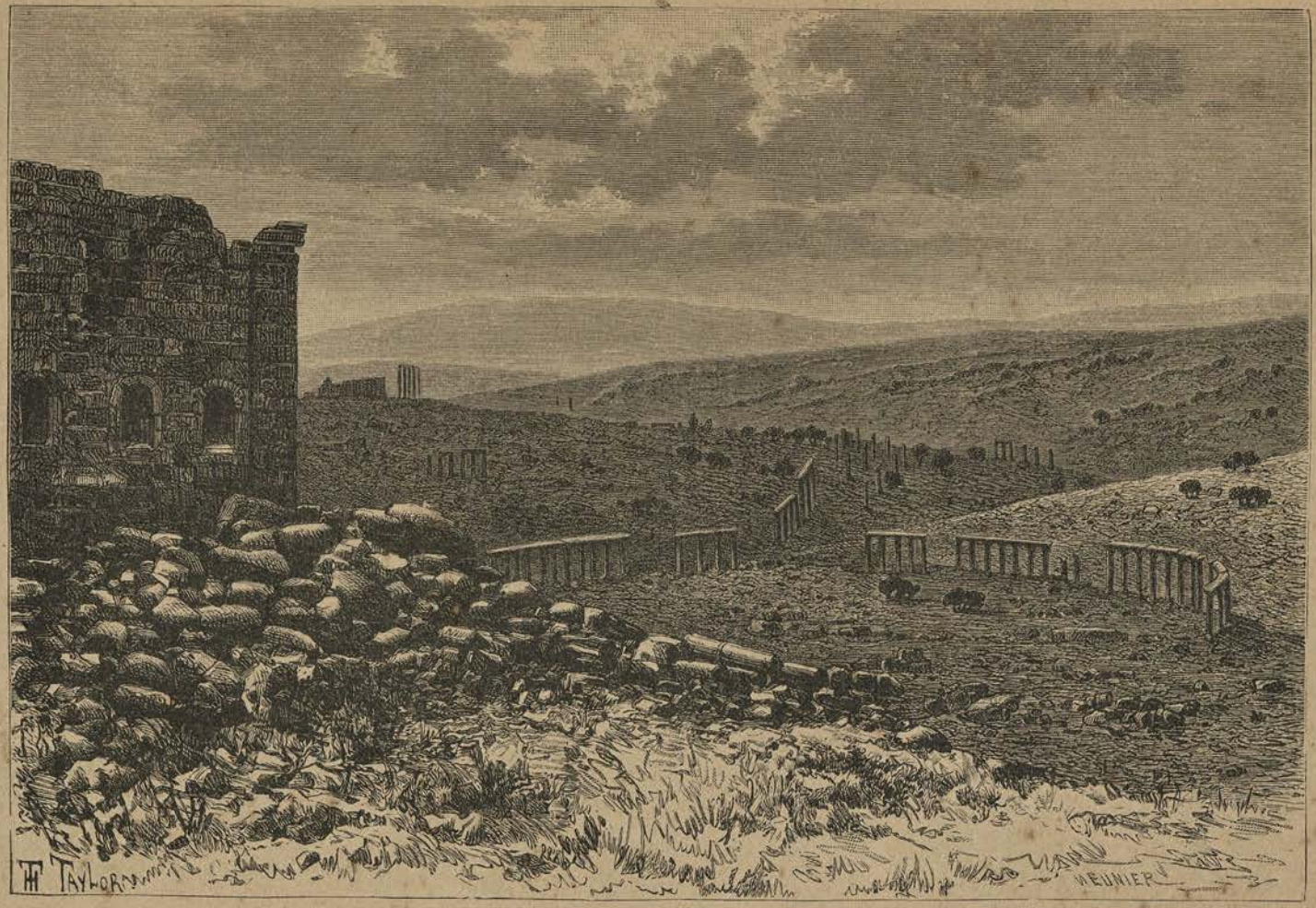
[2] Heads of Zabel and his mother Sequailath, placed one upon the other. On the reverse, their names and two cornucopias. Bronze coin.

[3] Ἐκ προνοίας of Corn. Balbus. (Waddington, *Inscr. de Syrie*, No. 2,296.)

[4] ARAB. ADQ. S. P. Q. R. OPTIMO PRINCIPI. S. C. Arabia standing; at her feet an ostrich. Great bronze.

[5] One inscription mentions a *cohors quinta Ulpia Petræorum*. (*Bull. de l'Inst. arch.*, 1870, p. 22.) In others is cited the *IIIa coh. Ituræorum*. (Wilmanns, 1,630, 1864.)

[6] We possess many coins with the legend: *Dacia captive* and the image of a woman with



Ruins of Gerasa, after Rey, *Voyage dans le Haouran.*

only by Britain, under Claudius, and the unhappy prince had won neither glory nor popularity by the success of his lieutenants. But the double expedition led by Trajan himself into an uncivilized country, the submission of a formidable people, the multitudes of colonists who were seen making their way from the heart of the provinces toward these fruitful lands, and the Roman eagles soaring above the Carpathian Mountains in the midst of a world of barbarians, all this produced what is called glory, and stirred men's imaginations. The senate decreed for the generals triumphal statues, for the prince his column, and the poets dreamed of epic songs in honour of the new Rome. "How can you find," wrote Pliny to his friend Caninius, "a subject so fruitful, and although all truth, more like a fable? You will show us vast rivers turned into arid plains,[1] new bridges thrown across rivers, camps established upon steep mountains, and a resolute king driven from his capital and deprived of life."[3] But, as the Latin spirit was already on the decline, in letters at least, it is in the metre and idiom of Homer that Caninius purposed to write his national poem; and Pliny, feeling the same solicitude as Boileau did, found only one difficulty in the task, that of introducing barbarous names into Greek verse.

Trajan's Return to Rome.[2]

However, when the conqueror of Dacia was back again in the city, one might have thought, looking at things from without, that there was only one senator more at Rome. This is the epigram of Martial. That impure poet, who styled Domitian a god, does not

her hands bound behind her back, seated or thrown down upon shields. (Cohen, ii., *Traj.*, No. 74.) One other (No. 332), later than the conquest, bears for legend: *Dacia Aug. prov. s. c.*, and shows Dacia seated upon a rock holding an ensign surmounted by an eagle; on the left a child holding ears of corn; before her, another child holding a bunch of grapes. It is the medal of the colonization.

[1] Allusion to some river which Trajan had turned from its course for some military operation.

[2] Bronze medallion, struck in 106, on the return from the campaign in Dacia. The emperor, mounted, head bare, with cuirass and holding a spear, is preceded by Plenty and followed by three soldiers.

[3] *Epist.*, viii. 4.

even accord to Trajan the name of lord. "We no longer behold a master here," he cries, "but the most just of senators."[1] He, in fact, discussed with his colleagues, legislated or occupied the judge's seat with them;[2] he suffered them to fulfil, with entire freedom, their innocent functions, and even to dispose as they saw fit of the magistracies, those gilded idols still held in great veneration, but from which political life had withdrawn.[3] To promote a greater number of senators to the consulate, Trajan appointed twelve consuls each year, and only five times during his reign assumed the fasces himself, submitting to all the customary formalities, even to the oath taken while standing before the consul in charge, who remained seated and dictated the words.

For the elections he established the secret ballot, which furnished a safeguard to the dignity of the senators, since the eye of the prince could not note the opposers. Pliny applauds this reform and at the same time fears it, with good reason. This mode of balloting, good for the inferior class whose freedom requires protection, is bad for the great, who by this means escape the responsibility of their vote. It is true that the great were at that time very inferior persons. The first time that the senators made use of this new mode of voting, jests and even improper language were found upon several of the ballots; one of them bore the names of the supporters in place of the names of the candidates. At these unexpected revelations the senate resounded with indignant outcries, and all the wrath of the emperor was invoked upon the guilty. They remained unknown. These malicious jesters were doubtless witty fellows who, in public, played their part with great gravity, but laughed under the mask at the comedy they had just acted. Pliny is not one of these; a

[1] *Epigr.*, x. 12.

[2] For instance, in the case of Marius Priscus, proconsul of Africa, prosecuted for malversation, Pliny and Tacitus were directed by the senate to conduct the accusation. The arguments lasted three days, and Trajan was present at all the sittings, which were protracted, as on one occasion Pliny spoke four hours. Priscus was condemned to banishment (December, 99, and January, 100). Pliny was also charged by the senate to sustain the complaint brought by the whole province against Cæcilius Classicus, proconsul of Bætica (101 ?). Under Domitian he had obtained the condemnation of another proconsul of this province, Bæbius Massa. (*Epist.*, iii. 4 and 9.) In 103 or 104 he defended Julius Bassus, proconsul of Bithynia.

[3] Exception must, of course, be made in the case of the civil magistracies (*prætor urbanus, peregr., de fidei commissis*) and the administrative or military functions of the provincial governors and commanders of legions, which were necessarily very active.

man so pre-occupied with public opinion maintained etiquette and ceremony even in his bed-chamber, where, that very evening, he related the scene to a friend, demanding whether such persons were not capable of anything. Why then does he disturb his serenity by discordant words? He conscientiously admires his prince and with good reason; he even comes little short of believing himself back in the times of the Republic. "You have commanded us to be free," cries he, "and we shall be free."[1] They allowed themselves to be deceived by his words, and some thought themselves transported back to the ancient Republic. A secretary of the emperor, Titinius Capito, erected in his house, in the place of honour, statues of Brutus, Cassius, and Cato, which had ceased to be seditious. He wrote the history of these eminent citizens immolated by tyranny, and gave public readings upon them, at which all the highest society of Rome congregated.[3] But men who require to be commanded to be free, never will be. Liberty is "taken by violence," or better, public opinion imposes it. The people who would receive it by order would neither be worthy nor capable of preserving it. In reality, the authority of Trajan was as absolute as that of any of his predecessors.

Cassius.[2]

[1] *Panegyr.*, 56.

[2] Statue, beautiful in style and well preserved. The plinth bears the name of *Cassius*. (Villa Massimi. Clarac, *Musée de Sculpt.*, pl. 912B, No. 2,303.)

[3] Pliny, *Epist.*, i. 17; viii. 12.

Pliny in his *Letters*, where he is no longer hampered by official eloquence, clearly shows that Rome had not ceased to have a master. "It is true," says he, "that all is done according to the will of one man, who, in the common interest, himself alone undertakes the cares and labours of all."[1] He so far forgets himself, in the *Panegyric*, as to make this prince the universal proprietor, "who may at his will dispose of all that others possess."[2]

Trajan is one of the most sympathetic characters in history. If he lacks the lofty intelligence and political audacity of the reconstructive reformer, he possesses the wisdom and power which consolidate and preserve. With the miracle of a succession of emperors such as he, Rome would have been saved, because in countries of absolute government the power of the prince for good is equal to that for evil. We always discern in his decisions the spirit of justice, in his administrative correspondence perfect good sense, in his private life moderation and discretion, with exception of certain vices of the time;[3] at the palace economy, in the public works magnificence; in all, and for all, discipline, order, and absolute respect arising from law.

Thus he opposed pronouncing condemnation against a person involuntarily absent, or upon an anonymous denunciation. "It is better," he writes to Severus, "to let a guilty person escape than punish an innocent one."[4] It was the simplest equity, and there would have been no occasion to praise him for it if others had not so often done the opposite. For suits with the treasury he established a tribunal whose judge was designated by lot, and in which the parties had the right of challenge. "Power and liberty," says Pliny, "plead at the same forum, and most frequently it is not the treasury that wins—the treasury whose case is never a poor one except under a good prince."[5]

[1] *Sunt quidem cuncta sub unius arbitrio, qui pro utilitate communi solus omnium curas laboresque suscepit* (iv. 20).

[2] . . . . *Cujus est quidquid est omnium, tantum ipse quantum omnes habet* (27).

[3] Fronto (*ad M. Anton. de Fer. Als.*, 3) says of him: *Summus bellator tam histrionibus interdum sese delectavit et præterea potavit satis strenue*, and Aurel. Victor is obliged (*de Cæs.*, 13) to say: *Curari vetans jussa post longiores epulas.* He had another vice of the time. When Julian makes him enter the assembly of the gods, Silenus, at sight of him, becomes anxious for Ganymede: "Our lord Jupiter," says he, "has now only to keep watch over our cup-bearer."

[4] *Digest*, xlviii. 19, 5.

[5] *Panegyr.*, 36.

Often he came and took a seat among the judges, heard the witnesses, and rendered decisions, though it might, as in case of Marius Priscus, require him to remain three whole days in the senate, over which he presided in capacity of consul. He received the appeals from all the tribunals of the Empire, and retained the cases for which his personal examination was solicited. Pliny has left us the picture of one of these imperial assizes, in a charming letter which awakens our love for the writer, but far more still for the prince concerning whom it was written. "I have been," says he, "summoned to a council at *Centum Cellæ*. Cases of different kinds were heard. Claudius Aristo, a man of consequence among the Ephesians, had been accused by envious persons. He was acquitted and received satisfaction.[1] The next day the case of Galitta, wife of a military tribune, was heard. She was accused of adultery with a centurion. The husband wrote an account of it to the consular legate, who referred the matter to the prince. The proofs being conclusive, Cæsar broke the centurion and condemned him to banishment. His accomplice remained. But the husband delayed, and, content with the removal of his rival, retained his wife in his house. He was summoned to finish the charge, which he did against his will, but even in spite of the accuser she was found guilty and sentenced to the punishment inflicted by the *Lex Julia*. The emperor added to the sentence both the name of the centurion and an account of the military discipline, lest it might be imagined he reserved the power of all such trials to himself.[2]

"The third day they examined the codicils of Julius Tiro, some of which were admitted and other parts charged to have been forged. Sempronius Senecio, a Roman knight, and Eurythmus, a freedman of the prince and an officer of his household, were accused in this case. Their heirs jointly, by a written epistle, petitioned the emperor, during his Dacian expedition, to take the determination of the cause upon himself. On his return to Rome he appointed a day for their hearing. Some, out of respect to a freedman of the palace, would have dropped the prosecution. 'I

[1] That is, the delator was punished. I give only so much of this letter as treats of the judgments.

[2] It is as *imperator* or chief of the army that he gave judgment in this cause.

am not Nero,' said he to them, 'nor is he Polycletus.' Then, in accordance with the opinion of the council, he commanded that notice should be given to all the heirs to prosecute their cause, or that each of them should assign his reasons for desisting; otherwise he would pronounce sentence against them as calumniators. You see in how honourable and weighty affairs our days were passed."[1]

He disliked the delators, although that class was a necessity at Rome and the law encouraged them by according to them, even in civil cases, one quarter of the fortune of the condemned (*quadruplatores*). Under the bad princes they gained far more. Trajan, who had already expelled from Rome those who were most compromised in the political accusations, greatly lessened for the others the perquisites of their industry, by deciding that the citizens holding caducary property who, of their own motion, might make a declaration of it to the treasury prior to the introduction of any suit, should share the heritage with it. He seems even to have established a sort of penalty of retaliation.[2] Pliny has just shown Trajan condemning as calumniators those who preferred a charge without sustaining the accusation, and the penalty was a grave one—usually that which the accused would have incurred. "Let them suffer," says Pliny, "what they have made others suffer; let them fear as much as they are feared."[3]

The law of majesty had received a deplorable extension by the permission granted to slaves to accuse their master: Trajan[4] withdrew this right from them. At the same stroke he broke one of the weapons of tyranny and restored peace to the bosom of families, for the rich were no longer to be surrounded by hateful spies in their inmost dwellings, even in the intimacy and secrecy of private life. He strengthened the discipline of slavery and clientelage, by deciding by an edict that the freedman or slave who had purchased or obtained of an emperor, without the knowledge of his patron or master, the complete right of citizenship and

[1] *Epist.*, v. 31.

[2] This is the opinion of Bach, *de Leg. Traj. imp. comment.*

[3] *Panegyr.*, 35.

[4] The torso of the statue given on page 785 was found in 1747, near ancient Minturnæ. On the cuirass are two young girls dancing at the side of Minerva. The head is added, but antique. The arms and legs are restored. (Clarac, *Mus.*, pl. 942, No. 2,412.)

Statue of Trajan (Museum of Naples).

consequently the free disposition of his property, might retain this right during his life-time, but at his death should become a Latin freedman, so that his fortune reverted to his former patron.[1] The former legislation condemned to death all the slaves of the master who had been assassinated; it was aggravated by a constitution of Trajan, which in this case subjected to torture not only the testamentary freedmen, but those who, having received during the life-time of the master their liberty, possessed in totality or in part the Roman citizenship. This prince did not, therefore, feel the effect of the doctrines which were then agitating slavery. He preserved the ancient institution, and yet he did not allow it to be fraudulently altered. A great number of children born free were exposed or stolen, and served as slaves. He recognized their perpetual right to reclaim their liberty, without having to repurchase it by payment for food which they had received.[2]

With the same spirit of justice he directed a legitimate blow at paternal authority, by forcing the father who had maltreated his son to give him his freedom and to renounce his heritage.[3] It appears that we must also date back to him the creation of the *curator rei publicæ*, a function excellent within the limitations which he gave it, but injurious to municipal independence when it had become the foremost office in the cities. At least, it is in three inscriptions of the reign of Trajan that we find the earliest mention of these extraordinary magistrates appointed by the emperor to look after the financial administration of municipal officers.[4] Bergamum, which had one, found itself from that day under guardianship, since it could not, without authority from its curator, alienate a part of its domain, or even undertake a construction of any importance. Æcæ, in Apulia, and ancient Cære obtained them. These towns had doubtless solicited the intervention of the prince, as we shall further on see Apamea requesting Pliny to audit its accounts. It

[1] Martial, *Epigr.*, x. 34. Cf. Pliny, *Epist.*, x. 4 and 6.

[2] Pliny, *Epist.*, x. 72. Constantine will recognize the right of paternal power to him who shall have adopted and reared an abandoned child.

[3] *Digest*, xxxvii. 12, 5. He accorded to a pupil an action of indemnity against the magistrate who had not exercised suitable care in the choice of his tutors.

[4] L. Renier, *Mélanges d'épigraphie*, p. 41; Orelli, 3,787, 3,898 and 4,007, and Henzen, *Ann. de l'Inst. arch.*, 1851, pp. 5-35. The *curator* of the Antonines is not the functionary who will absorb all the life of the cities; it is a comptroller who defends the towns against incurring expense or the unfaithful conduct of certain agents.

was well to send them a temporary commissioner, with a special mission to correct irregularities and bring matters into good condition. It will be an injury to create a permanent function which will eventually suppress the administrative autonomy of the cities.

He also sent a legate into the Transpadane district. The presence of a superior magistrate invested with the military *imperium* had doubtless been rendered necessary there by some tumult; but Italy lost one of its privileges, and the whole region beyond the Po was brought back to the condition of a provincial territory.

During his reign of nineteen years Trajan augmented no tribute, but diminished several,[1] confiscated no fortune, and exacted no legacy. "The citizens at last enjoyed security in making their wills, and the prince was no longer, in consequence of his name having been inscribed or forgotten on the testamentary document, the sole heir of every one."[2] He refused the presents, formerly voluntary but now become obligatory, which people were required to offer to the prince as a "gift of happy accession," and he remitted taxes in arrears.[3] This had been done by several of his predecessors; but he abolished the distinction which Augustus had established by the law of the twentieth between the old and new citizens. Those who had attained the municipal right by the privileges of Latium, or who had obtained it from princes without receiving at the same time the *jus cognationis*, were considered as strangers in the bosom of their family, and subjected, when they succeeded to an inheritance, to the payment of dues, were they father, son, or brother of the deceased. Many small heritages were consequently exempted from dues of transmission,[4] as we exempt lesser tenants from tax in great cities. It was a diminution of receipts, but at the same time the emperor charged a senatorial commission to seek means of lessening the public expenditure,[5] and we are assured that with a firm will, as was that of Trajan, the commission fulfilled its duty.

[1] Pliny, *Panegyr.*, 41.

[2] *Panegyr.*, 43. Cf. Suet., *Calig.*, 38; *Nero*, 31, 32.

[3] A marble, found at Rome in 1872, seems to represent Trajan burning a pile of tablets bearing treasury dues. (*Bull. di Corresp. archeol.*, 1872, p. 280.)

[4] *Panegyr.*, 37–40.

[5] *Minuendis publicis sumptibus* (Pliny, *Epist.*, ii. 1, and *Panegyr.*, 62).

It is, in fact, curious to see with what ease the finances of the Empire recovered as soon as an intelligent prince put a stop to foolish prodigalities. We know the financial embarrassments of Domitian and Nero; their successor, thanks to order, to economy in the expenditures of luxury and ceremonial, was in a condition to carry on immense works, a great war, magnificent building enterprises, all the while diminishing the taxes, and yet had resources remaining to create the finest institution of the Empire.

Victory Flying: Figurine of Bronze found at Veleia (*Cabinet de France*).

Nerva, some months before his death, had resolved to aid poor parents of free condition to rear their children, to "insure," as an inscription has it, "the eternity of Italy."[1] Trajan adopted this project and gave it grand proportions. From the year 100, 5,000 children received State aid at Rome.[2] The *Inscription of Veleia*, one of the longest which have come down to us, and the *Table of the Bæbiani* for the apportionment of food

[1] That relating to Pomponius Bassus, *ap.* Orelli, No. 784: *Qua æternitati Italiæ suæ prospexit . . . . ita ut omnis ætas curæ ejus merito gratias agere debeat.*

[2] Pliny, *Panegyr.*, 28. For the distributions they still continued at Rome to make use of the lists prepared by Cæsar, on which new names were inscribed as often as vacancies occurred, *in locum erasorum*. Trajan ordered that the portion for the sick and the absent should be held in reserve until they should be able to come and receive it. (*Panegyr.*, 25.)

among the poor, enable us to ascertain the ingenious system which he devised.[1] The means employed consisted of a two-fold operation skilfully combined to assure the future of the institution against the hasty caprices of a less generous government. The treasury lent money on mortgage, through the municipality, to certain proprietors, for the improvement of their estates, and the interest paid by them at the moderate rate of five per cent., sometimes even of two and a half,[2] supplied the resources by means of which a sort of benevolent fund was established. Thus, according to the Table of Veleia, fifty-one proprietors had received for property of ten or twelve times the value of the loan on mortgage,[3] a sum of 1,116,000 sesterces (278,000 francs), the annual interest of which, 55,800 sesterces (13,950 francs), served for the support of 300 children: 264 boys and 36 girls. The boys received annually 192 sesterces (48 francs), the girls 144 (36 francs).[4]

[1] It was discovered in 1747 in the neighbourhood of Plaisance, and contains 630 lines in seven columns. In 1832 another was found at Campolattari, near Benevento: *Tabula alimentaria Bæbianorum.* The first is of the year 104, the second of the year 101. Veleia was destroyed by a landslip from a mountain in the time of Probus. (*Rev. arch.*, 1881, p. 242.)

[2] The usual interest in the provinces was twelve per cent: *Duodenis assibus.* (Pliny, *Epist.*, x. 62.) It remained at this rate from Severus to Justinian. In Italy it was only six. (Columella, iii. 3, and Pliny, *Epist.*, vi. 18.) We have seen (vol. iii. p. 759) Augustus lend without interest to whoever could give security for twice the amount; Tiberius did the same (vol. iv. p. 360); and Alex. Severus will lend money to the poor at three per cent. to enable them to purchase land.

[3] This is at least the relative value most frequently found in the tables of Veleia and of the *Bæbiani.* Cf. Desjardins, *de Tabulis alim.*, and Henzen, *Tab. alim.*

[4] I take the value of the sesterce at 25 centimes (2½d.); this is about the value given it at this time by Dureau de la Malle, Hultsch, Friedländer, and Mommsen, but this value is probably too high. Pliny (*Hist. Nat.*, xviii. 20, 2) gives as the average price of flour in his time forty asses or ten sesterces the *modius.* He adds that the modius (nearly two gallons) furnished twenty-six or twenty-seven pounds of bread. The Roman pound being a little less than three-fourths of a pound avoirdupois, for ten sesterces they had then about nineteen pounds of bread, and for 192 sesterces, the annual allowance of a boy, 365 pounds a year, or a pound a day. But the price of wheat, four sesterces a modius in the time of Cicero (*Verr.*, iii. 77), had certainly not risen in the country as high as the figure given by Pliny for choice flour, and we know that at that time an abstemious philosopher could get along on half a sesterce a day. Seneca, urging Lucilius to live from time to time on hard, coarse bread, *panis durus ac sordidus,* to practise voluntary poverty, tells him: "It will not cost you more than two asses to be satisfied, *dipondio satur.*" (*Epist.*, vi. 18.) Origen, who lived a long time on four oboli a day (5⅓d., or eleven cents), was a prodigal. Epicurus succeeded in making on certain days less than one as suffice; but his disciple, Metrodorus, who had not yet attained the state of perfection of the *magister voluptatis,* required an entire as. (*Ibid.*) Besides, Seneca (*Epist.*, 63) informs us that the salary of an actor, playing important parts but of servile condition, was five modii and five denarii per month, that is, per day a little more than 2⅓lbs. of bread and 2½ asses. Friedländer (ii. p. 27) gives the reckoning of a dinner at a Cisalpine inn which cost only three asses; in the time of Polybius (ii. 15) it cost six times less, *ἡμιασσαρίον*—one-half of an as (or ⅜ths of a cent), or 3/16ths

Illegitimate children had less: the boys 144 sesterces, the girls 120; but in the 300 assisted of Veleia only two illegitimate are included, one boy and one girl. The foundation was established for a definite number of children, a number that did not change so long as the foundation was not increased, but the assistance varied, doubtless as the price of provisions in different localities: thus, at Veleia, 16 sesterces per month, at Terracina, 20.

At first glance one is tempted to believe that this institution is born of the sentiment of charity which philosophy infiltrated into the heart of pagan society. But, considering that among the children assisted only one-tenth were girls, it must be recognized that the alimentary law of Trajan had the same end as the laws of Augustus *de prole augenda*;[1] it was an encouragement given to the free population, and we remember that already the first emperor had, at Rome, admitted children to his distributions. Pliny shows plainly the character of the new institution: "These children are reared at the expense of the State, to be its support in war, its ornament in peace. Some day they will fill our camps, our tribes, and from them will arise sons who will no longer need this assistance."[2] But in another place he adds: "The truly liberal man gives to his country, to his neighbours, to his poor friends. . . . . He seeks out those who are in want, succours them, maintains them, and makes a kind of family of them."[3] Trajan himself reprimanded the towns which expended their revenues foolishly instead of aiding the poor;[4] and the extension given to the alimentary institution by his successors, the foundations which private individuals established, certainly had also for their motive an idea of benevolence, which may again be discovered in the very

of a penny. From all this it results that with sixty-four or eighty asses per month, sixteen or twenty sesterces, a child of poor family could live. In spite of the character of the *Satyricon*, it is allowable to take some account of these words of Petronius: "Then a loaf for an as was sufficient for two persons: to-day the as loaves are not bigger than a bull's-eye."

[1] See vol. iii. pp. 767 *sq.* Tacitus complains of the diminution of the class of free men in Italy, *minore in dies plebe ingenua* (*Ann.*, iv. 27).

[2] *Panegyr.*, 28.

[3] *Epist.*, ix. 30; x. 94.

[4] For instance, at Amisus, where he desired that a part of the revenue should be employed *ad sustinendam tenuiorum inopiam* (Pliny, *Epist.*, x. 104). A woman of Alexandria having brought forth at one birth three boys and two girls, Trajan or Hadrian assumed the expense of rearing them. (Phlegon, Περὶ θαυμασίων, 58, ed. Didot.)

ancient usage of *sportulæ* accorded to clients, and of distributions of land or grain made to the poor of Rome since the epoch of the Republic.[1]

It is to be noted that if, by the combination which Trajan had devised, the State lost the interest of its money, which it did not require to invest as an usurer, it preserved the capital, which, passing from one proprietor to another, carried fruitfulness to the country lands. The enfeebled agriculture of Italy was succoured[2] at the same time as the poor families, and the government hoped that these, having received timely assistance, would grow up in their condition in life, so that many of them, in the second generation, would have no further need of assistance.

Trajan, Restorer of Italy (Great Bronze, Cohen, No. 373).

Our modern societies, pervaded by the same evil as the Roman Empire, the proletariat, have as yet devised nothing so broad, and we may also add so skilfully conceived, as the alimentary law of Trajan; for they have for poor children only a small number of asylums and free schooling.

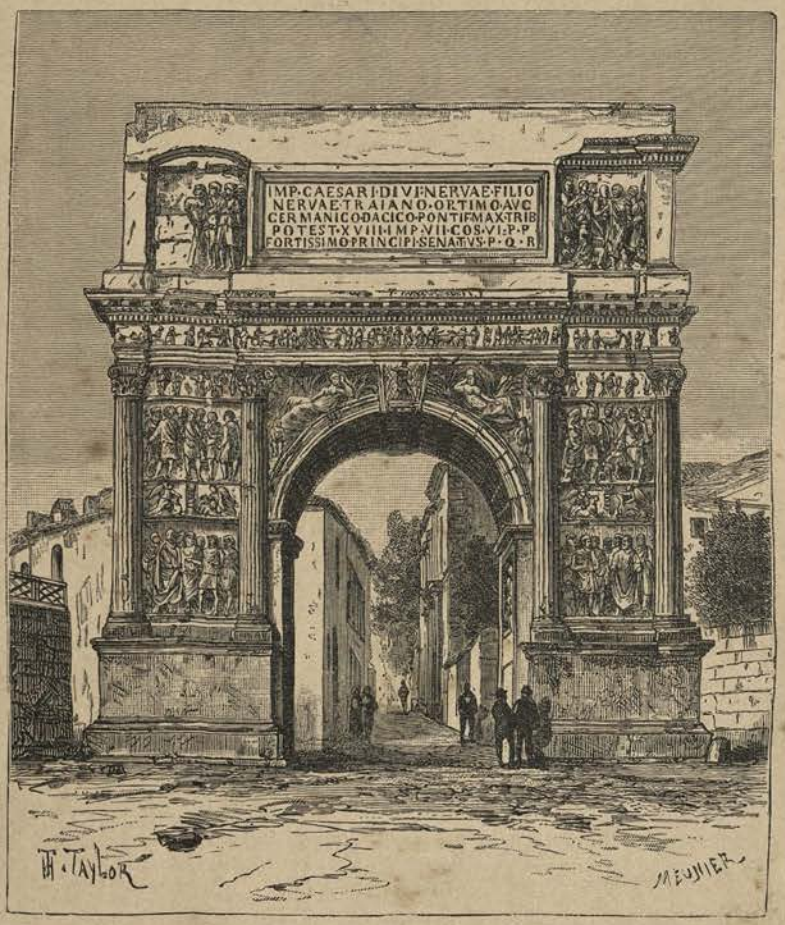
It cannot be affirmed that the institution was in a general measure established in the whole of Italy; but coins, inscriptions, and even sculptures, enable us to discover it in many places. Thus the bas-reliefs of the Arch of Benevento represent men carrying young boys on their shoulders, and four women, their heads adorned with mural crowns, conducting young girls to Trajan. Are these women the image of the four towns of the vicinity, or the symbol of all the cities of Italy which had profited by the same benefaction? The second hypothesis is the most probable, and Dion confirms it.[3]

[1] We read in an inscription as early as the time of Augustus: . . . . *hominis boni, misericordis, amantis pauperes* (Henzen, *ap.* Orelli, No. 7,244). The centurion Cornelius, in the *Acts of the Apostles*, was praised, before his conversion, for his alms to the poor.

[2] Another measure favourable to property in Italy, without always being so to its agriculture, was the edict which obliged the provincials who were candidates for the magistracies of Rome to have a third of their estate in Italy. (Pliny, *Epist.*, vi. 19.) This was in the spirit of a law of Cæsar and of another of Tiberius. Cf. vol. iii. p. 369. This edict was renewed by Marcus Aurelius, who only required a quarter. (Capitolin., *M. Anton.*, 11.)

[3] lxviii. 5. Cf. Rossini, *gli Archi trionfali*, tav. 38–43, and the coin last given (Cohen, ii., *Trajan*, No. 373), which represents Trajan standing, holding a sceptre surmounted by an

Provincial cities and wealthy individuals followed the example given by the emperors;[1] this pagan society, which ameliorated the lot of the slave, which was mindful of the misery of its poor, and



Arch of Trajan, built in 114 by Apollodorus, at Beneventum.

taught with Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius the finest precepts of morality, thus showed before its downfall that it possessed within

eagle, and raising up Italy, who is kneeling; between them two children extending their hands, and for legend: REST. ITALIÆ. Cf. *Id.*, Nos. 13, 14, 299–304.

[1] The successors of Trajan preserved and developed this institution. Hadrian, says Spartianus, 7, *pueris ac puellis . . . . incrementum liberalitatis adjecit:* and he decided that the alimentary pension should be continued to the boys until eighteen, to the girls until fourteen (*Digest*, xxxiv. 1, 14). Antoninus, in honour of his wife, increased the number of the young girls assisted, *Faustinianæ* (Capit., 8). We possess inscriptions in the name of the *pueri et puellæ alimentarii* of Cupra Montana, in honour of Antoninus and Urbinus, and of Ficulnea in honour of Marcus Aurelius. Capitolinus says of this prince: *de alimentis publicis multa prudenter*

it powers of renewal sufficient to save it, had it not been ruined by bad political enactments.

In the number of benevolent measures taken by Trajan must be reckoned the colonization[1] of Dacia, executed on a scale so vast that the Latin race still holds the immense country of which it then took possession. That this should have been the case requires us to admit that the number of colonists was considerable, and it

invenit, and, like his predecessor, at the death of the second Faustina, *novas puellas Faustinianas instituit*. Alexander Severus instituted also, in the name of his mother Mammæa, *Mammæanas* and *Mammæanos* (Lampridius, 57). Macrinus proposed to do the same (*Id., Diad.*, 2). The example of the emperors was followed by the rich citizens; thus Pliny (*Epist.*, vi. 18, and i. 8) instituted on one of his estates, in favour of Comum, his native town, a perpetual revenue of 30,000 sesterces *in alimenta ingenuorum;* Cælia Macrina bequeathed 1,000,000 sesterces to support 100 children at Terracina (Borghesi, *Œuvres*, vol. iv. p. 269, with annotations of L. Renier); a woman of Hispalis established a similar foundation (*C. I. L.*, vol. ii. No. 1,174); at Sicca, under Marcus Aurelius, a citizen presented to the town 1,300,000 sesterces in order that, with interest at five per cent., there might be annually support for 300 boys and 200 girls between the ages of four and fifteen, chosen by the duumviri, from the families not only of the *municipes*, but also of the *incolæ* established in the city. Each boy received two and a half denarii per month, each girl two denarii, and the list of the assisted was to be kept full (Guérin, *Voy. en Tunisie*, vol. ii. p. 59, No. 234). We find at Curubis in Africa a *curator alimentorum*. Cf., for other examples, Henzen, *Tab. alim.*, pp. 16 *sq.* This custom was even ancient: a contemporary of Augustus, Helvius Basila, *Atinatibus sestertium quadringenta millia legavit ut liberis eorum ex reditu, dum in ætatem pervenirent, frumentum et postea sestertia singula millia darentur* (Orelli, No. 4,365). In each town a *quæstor alimentorum* administered the fund of this institution. It seems that Marcus Aurelius had created, for the general oversight of this service, the *præfecti alim.*, who were men of high standing, former consuls and governors of provinces: *præf. alim. per Æmiliam; præf. alim. viæ Flaminiæ*, etc. See Borghesi, *Œuvres*, vol. iv. pp. 135 *sq.* We find again in 238, at Sarmizegetusa, a procurator of Dacia who had been, about the year 220, *procurator ad alimenta per Apuliam, Lucaniam et Bruttios* (*C. I. L.*, vol. iii. No. 1,456). On the extension which this institution had assumed, see the reign of Caracalla. According to the inscriptions and coins (Eckhel, vi. p. 406, coins of Gallienus and Claudius II.), the institution of Trajan seems to have lasted into the second half of the third century; the calamities of this epoch caused it to disappear. Constantine, in 315, attempted to combat the fearful progress of want by charity. His law (Code Theod., xi. 27, 1 and 2) prescribed alms, but did not revive the grand institution of the Antonines.

Memento of the Alimentary Law.(1)

Memento of the Alimentary Law of Trajan.(2)

[1] [But what about the conquest?—*Ed.*]

(1) S. P. Q. R. OPTIMO PRINCIPI S. C. ALIM. ITAL. A woman, standing, holding ears of corn and a horn of plenty; at her side a child. Large bronze of the *Cabinet de France.*

(2) The emperor seated has before him a woman, who is presenting children to him, one of whom is in her arms. Reverse of a bronze of the *Cabinet de France.*

is not to be supposed that they were taken among the rich. There was, therefore, a very extensive distribution of lands made, after the example of Republican Rome, to the needy of the Empire. In giving lands, they must also have given implements, seed, cattle, and everything necessary for a first establishment in a climate rigorous for southerners. The spoils of the Dacians served for these advances, and a number of towns were relieved of a part of their poor.[1]

The Forum of Trajan, FORUM TRAIAN. (Gold Coin.)

We would not venture to say that Trajan established free trade in grain, and consequently produced a decline in the price of wheat, or a more equable distribution; but the measures indicated by Pliny must have tended at least to this result,[2] and were a benefit.

Trajan honoured his reign by great public works, another fashion of giving bread to the poor. Apollodorus of Damascus, the bold constructor of the bridge over the Danube, wrote in marble the grand page of history which unrolls around the column under which the prince caused a tomb to be prepared for himself, and he built a new forum, which by its splendour eclipsed all those of the Cæsars. Two centuries and a half later Constantius contemplated it with admiration, and Ammianus Marcellinus esteemed it "the most magnificent group of edifices under the sun."[3] With his arch of triumph, his temple at that time consecrated to the divinity of Trajan, his two libraries for Greek books and for Latin books, his basilica, his immense porticoes surmounted by a people of great men in marble and bronze, forming as it were a guard of honour around his equestrian statue and his triumphal column, Trajan had surpassed Augustus in magnificence.

The Ulpian Basilica: BASILICA VLPIA. (Gold Coin.)

Rome owed to this great builder[4] many other embellishments;

[1] When Trajan raised *Petovium* to the rank of a colony, he sent there some veterans *missione agraria*, who were veritable colonists in the ancient meaning of the word. (*C. I. L.*, vol. iii. No. 4,057.)

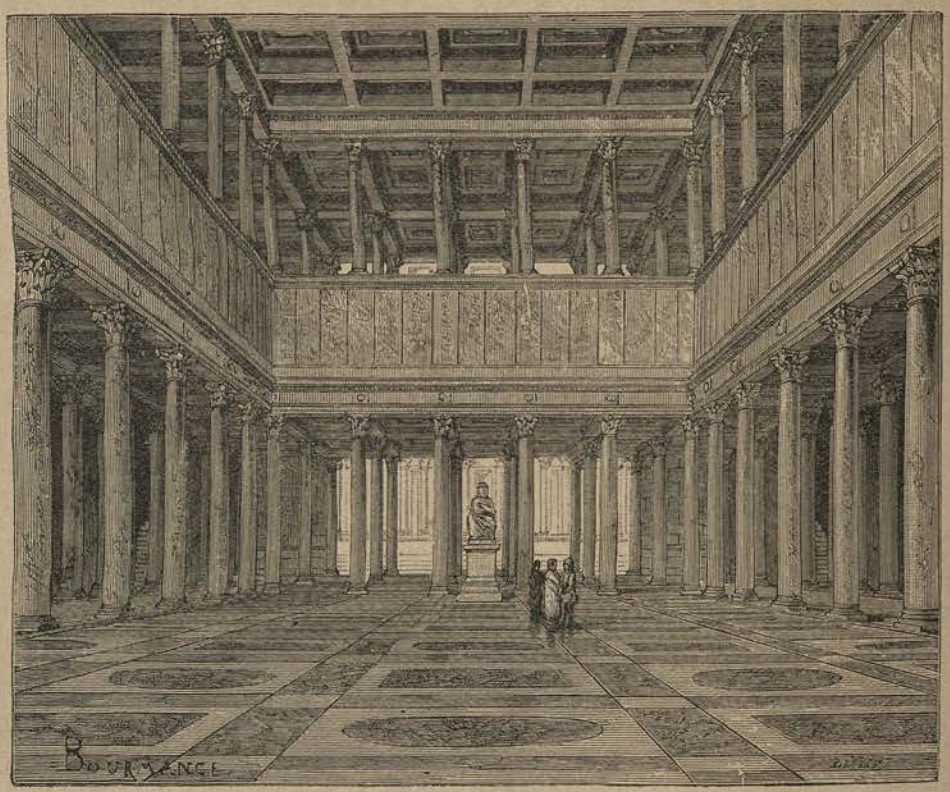
[2] *Panegyr.*, 29–32: . . . *Emit fiscus quidquid emere videtur; inde copiæ, inde annona, de qua inter licentem vendentemque conveniat; inde hic satietas, nec fames usquam.* He reorganized at Rome the guild of bakers, and the regulations which he gave them were so wise that Aurelius Victor could say (*de Cæs.*, 13) that Trajan had thereby *annonæ perpetuæ mire consultum.*

[3] xvi. 10: *Singularem sub cœlo structuram.*

[4] *Orbem terrarum ædificans* (Eutropius, viii. 2).

let us only note a tenth aqueduct, which conducted to the Janiculum water from the lake Sabatinus (*lago di Bracciano*).[1]

Two of the best of the ports of Italy which nature has not made entirely are the work of Trajan, and still remain: on the Adriatic, that of Ancona, where an arch of triumph in white marble recalls the benefactor of the town, and by its elegance puts to



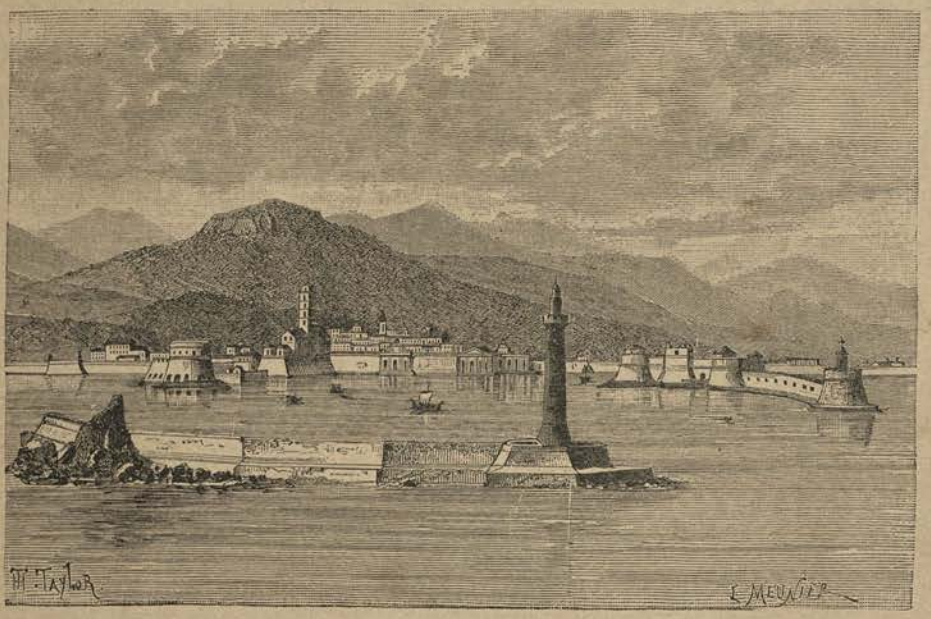
Interior of the Ulpian Basilica (Restoration by Lesueur).

shame the arch which they have had the imprudence to erect in the vicinity to Pope Clement XII.; on the sea of Tuscany, that of Civita-Vecchia (Centum-Cellæ), a city which owes everything to him. To hasten the execution of the work he had a villa built there, in which he came and resided. Pliny, who passed several days there, describes vessels going continually to cast into the sea entire cliffs, to form in front of the harbour and its two moles a dike against which the sea broke with fury. Great sanitary works were undertaken throughout all Italy, and the celebrated

[1] This is the *Acqua Paola* of modern Rome.

Arch of Trajan, at Ancona.

Galen, who was almost a contemporary, extols their happy effects upon the public health. "Many ancient roads were out of repair and encroached upon by brushwood; others difficult of ascent, dangerous to descend, or gullied by torrents. By the care of the prince the wet and low portions were paved, the places difficult to pass were levelled, the turbulent waters restrained by dikes and bridges."[1] On one of these highways, reconstructed at the expense of the prince, the senate caused the Arch of Benevento to



Civita-Vecchia; Harbour of *Centum Cellæ* (Restoration, *Bibl. nationale*).

be erected to preserve the remembrance of these great works. Trajan proposed, like Cæsar, to drain the Pontine Marshes, and Dion speaks of stoned causeways which he constructed there; but the levels were badly taken, and the *Ponte Maggiore*, through which the waters were to flow off, did not afford a sufficient outlet for them.[2] He seems to have resuscitated, by sending a colony there, the antique city of Lavinium, where the consuls and prætors, at their entrance on their duties, went and sacrificed to Vesta and the Penates.[3]

[1] *De Meth. medendi*, ix. 8.

[2] De Prony, *Desséchement des marais pontins*, pp. 76 and 241.

[3] The custom still subsisted in the time of Macrobius (*Sat.*, II. iv.).

He enlarged the harbour of Claudius at Ostia by excavating in it the *lago Trajano*, which communicated with the Tiber by a canal, the *Fiumicino;* vessels then had for their manœuvres a surface of water of 280 acres.[1]

In Egypt, Trajan made such extensive improvements in the *Ptolemœus amnis*, between the Nile and the Red Sea, that the canal henceforth bore his name, Τραϊανὸς ποταμός. It was to afford new facilities to commerce and especially for working the fine quarries of porphyry and granite at Djebel-Dokhan and Djebel-Fateereh, in the neighbourhood of the harbours of Myos-Hormos and Philotera, so that the columns which were quarried there were easily transported to Rome and to all the maritime cities of the Empire.[2]

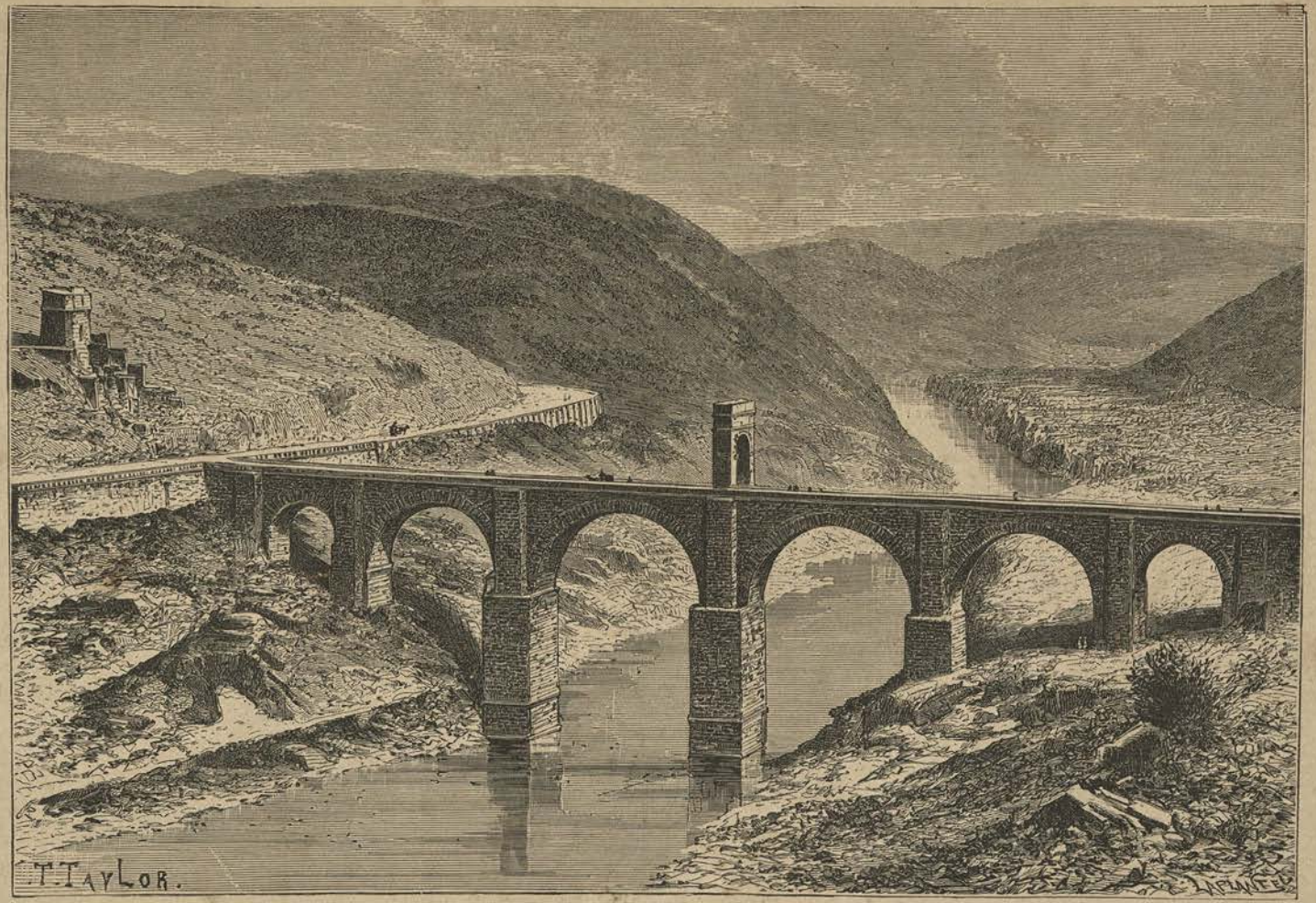
We have seen that he threw two permanent bridges across the Rhine and the Danube; they have disappeared, like those which he constructed to keep open to the legions the countries situated beyond the Tigris and the Euphrates; we have discovered one of them, in ruins, in the valley of the Medjerda, in Tunis, but that of Alcantara, on the Tagus, is still in existence, 196$\frac{8}{10}$ feet high and 616$\frac{4}{5}$ feet long.[3] For the latter Trajan had only to second the zeal of the provincials by sending one of his best architects to several Lusitanian cities, which had taxed themselves for the expense of this colossal structure, a new proof of the prosperity of the provinces at this period, and of the ease with which the interests of their inhabitants could be brought home to them. Numerous inscriptions show that the roads were made or repaired at the expense of the municipalities whose territory they traversed, sometimes with a grant from the treasury.

In imitation of the capital, the provincial cities expended enormous sums for their embellishment. Whence did they derive them? The prince had recently opened to them a new and prolific

[1] Lanciani, *Sulla città di Porto.*

[2] Letronne, *Inscr. gr. et rom. d'Égypte*, i. 195 and 420. At Djebel-Fateereh or *Mons Claudianus*, in the Porphyritic chain, several inscriptions prove that Trajan gave a great impulse to the work of these quarries. (*C. I. L.*, vol. iii. Nos. 24, 25, and Letronne, *Inscr. d'Égypte*, 39–42.) At Djebel-Fateereh, at a distance of ten leagues from the Red Sea, monoliths have been found lying on the ground, which were 59 feet long by 26$\frac{1}{2}$ feet in circumference.

[3] *C. I. L.*, vol. ii. Nos. 759, 762. That of Chaves (Aquæ Flaviæ), on the Tamago in Galicia, still subsists also. (*C. I. L.*, vol. ii. No. 2,478.) There is no bridge in England as high as that of Alcantara, and only one in France, that of Saint Sauveur, which surpasses it by a few yards.



Bridge of Alcantara, constructed by Trajan.

source of revenue. The old jurisprudence, considering the towns, like the guilds or associations, as "undefined persons," did not deem them capable of receiving a legacy,[1] at least without a special authorization.[2] Nerva recognized in them this capability, but in quite vague terms, it appears, since the prudent Pliny did not dare to use this rescript.[3] The Apronian senatus-consultum, passed under Trajan, permits cities to receive inheritances by way of trusteeship, a last inconvenience which will disappear under Hadrian.[4] Then the city will become a civil person, as our French commune is, but between the two epochs a great difference exists. Municipal patriotism was in those times active in a far different way than now, and there were no religious congregations to attract [and secure] the liberality of the dying; so that donations, which have now become authorized, become very abundant and go directly to the city to serve its wants and even its pleasures.[5] Often, on the eve of a municipal election, a candidate agreed to execute some public work for the town, and on the morrow forgot his promise. A rescript made this promise a legal obligation which bound even his heirs.[6] Finally, the abstraction of municipal funds, hitherto considered as a simple misappropriation, was assimilated to peculation, which was punished by the confiscation of property and banishment.[7] This is how the whole Empire, at the epoch of the Antonines, could become covered with aqueducts, thermæ, theatres, bridges, and roads, over which the imperial post system, lately reorganized, promoted circulation.[8] The honour of this impulse given

[1] Ulpian, *fr.* xxii. 5.

[2] See in vol. v. the chapter concerning the *City*, § 3.

[3] *Epist.*, v. 7.

[4] Paulus, *Digest*, xxxvi. 1, 26; Cod., vi. 24, 12, and Ulpian, *fr.* xxiv. 28: *Civitatibus . . . . legari potest; idque a D. Nerva introductum, postea a senatu, auctore Hadriano, diligentius constitutum est.*

[5] Paulus (*Digest*, xxx. *fr.* 122) says: *Civitatibus legari potest quod ad honorem ornatumque civitatis pertinet. Ad ornatum, puta quod ad instruendum forum, theatrum, stadium legatum fuerit. Ad honorem, puta quod ad munus edendum, venationemve, ludos scenicos, ludos circenses relictum fuerit, aut quod ad divisionem singulorum civium, vel epulum relictum fuerit. Hoc amplius, quod in alimenta infirmæ ætatis (puta, senioribus, vel pueris, puellisque) relictum fuerit.*

[6] Paulus, *Digest*, xlviii. 13, 2 and 4, § 4.

[7] *Digest*, l. 12, 14, pr.

[8] It was maintained by the cities. Nerva, in 97, had exempted the Italian towns from this tax. (See on this point p. 736.) Trajan appears to have improved the service by correcting abuses, such as the use which private persons made of the *cursus publicus* in their private interest, and by placing the service under the direction of *præfecti vehiculorum*. Cf. Pliny,

to public works was justly ascribed to the prince, and so many monuments, from the borders of the Tagus to those of the Euphrates, bore the date of his reign, that Constantine, vexed at finding his name everywhere, compared Trajan to the wall-wort which attaches itself to every stone wall. But these temples, these basilicas, bridges, and aqueducts had been built by him,[1] or he had instigated the construction of them; and he had not decorated them with spoils stolen from others, while Constantine carried away bas-reliefs from the Arch of Trajan to ornament the one he erected in Rome.

Yet men were found to conspire against him, so difficult was it for the Roman aristocracy to abandon plots, even under the prince who testified so much regard for it. One Crassus, who had been condemned under Nerva for a like attempt, tried to assassinate him. Trajan refused to pay any attention to the affair; he let the senate inquire into it, render judgment, and put the sentence into execution, which only amounted to banishment. Crassus is the only member of the senate who was punished under this reign for an attempt against the life of the emperor.[2]

The prince who, better than any other, deserved a historian, has none,[3] and we can know nothing more when we have completed the study of the monuments, inscriptions, coins, and a few rare fragments scattered here and there in the epitomists. Yet there remains to us a document of this time, valuable for information, by an example taken from life, of the state of the provinces, the duties of the legate, the part of the prince in the general administration, and how much the towns had already lost of their independence: it is the correspondence of Pliny and Trajan. Let

Epist., x. 62 and 120, and Henzen, *Ann. de l'Inst. arch.*, 1857, p. 98. The passage of Aur. Victor (*Cæs.*, 13) is not clear.

[1] The bridge of Simittu Colonia had been built *opera militum suorum et pecunia sua.*

[2] . . . . *unus senator damnatus per senatum*, says Eutropius (viii. 2), *ignorante Trajano.* He had accomplices who were banished, or other plots were formed. At least, at the beginning of the following reign, a friend of Hadrian induced him to dispose of one Laberius Maximus, who was banished to an island under suspicion of having aspired to the Empire, and of Crassus Frugi, who was put to death for having quitted his place of exile.

[3] He had them, but we do not possess them. The works of Marius Maximus, Fabius Marcellinus, Aurelius Verus, and Statius Valens, who wrote his life, are lost, like the first thirteen books of Ammianus Marcellinus, whose *History of the Emperors*, a continuation of Suetonius, began at Nerva; of Dion only the meagre abstract of Xiphilinus remains to us. The abridgments of Aurelius Victor and of Eutropius give very little.

Bridge of Trajan at Chemtou (*Simittu Colonia*) in Tunis, after a Drawing by M. Ch. Tissot (p. 804).

us quote this curious dialogue between the emperor in his capital and the governor of one of his most remote provinces, Bithynia. The questions are simple, the replies exact, and the inferences obvious.[1]

I. *Imperial authorization of public works.*

"May the Prusans be authorized to replace with new thermæ their baths which are old and unsightly?—Yes, if they do not thereby incur any new taxation and if the ordinary service is not sufficient."

"Sinope lacks water: I have found a spring sixteen miles away; but the aqueduct will have to pass for a distance of a thousand paces over soft and uncertain ground. I can easily collect the money required; it remains for me to secure your approval.[2]—Make this aqueduct, but after having carefully examined whether the suspicious locality can bear it, and if the expense does not exceed the ability of the town."

"Nicomedia has expended 3,329,000 sesterces for an aqueduct which is in ruins, 2,000,000 for another which has been abandoned. I have means for making a third which will stand, if you will send an aqueduct-builder and an architect.—Conduct water to Nicomedia, but investigate by whose fault so much money has been wasted."

"Nicæa has expended 10,000,000 sesterces for a theatre which is tottering, and great sums for a gymnasium which was burned and which they are rebuilding. At Claudiopolis they are excavating a bath with money which the decurions offer for their admission to the Curia. What ought I to do with respect to all these works? Send me an architect.—You are on the spot, decide. As to architects, we send to Greece for them; you will therefore find them about you."

"It seems to me that the contractors of the works of the town of Prusa are getting more than is due them. Send me a

[1] I do not give, of course, the text of these letters, but the briefest indication of their contents. Mommsen, in his *Étude sur Pline*, p. 30, thinks that the correspondence with Trajan extends from September, 111, beyond January, 113.

[2] In these two cases it is a question of deferring or establishing taxes, and in France to do this requires the decision of a sovereign, that is to say, a law. Besides, from the nature of the imperial power, the emperor could always intervene, even for the slightest interests. A prefect of Egypt asked authority of Nero to clear away the sand which accumulated at the foot of the pyramids. (Letronne, *Inscr. d'Égypte*, vol. ii. p. 466.) On all these municipal questions see, in vol. v., the chapter on the *City*.

surveyor to measure the work.—They are to be had everywhere; make good search and you will find one."

"Amastris is infected by a sewer which ought to be covered. If you permit this work to be executed I have the money required. —Cover this infectious stream with a vault."

"There is a great lake on the confines of the territory of Nicomedia; it would be highly advantageous to connect it with the sea by a canal.—Take care that the lake, in uniting with the sea, does not run out entirely. I will send you from here men conversant with this kind of work."

II. *Supervision of municipal finances.*

"The towns of the province have money and no borrowers at 12 per cent. Ought I to lessen the rate of interest and then compel the decurions to take charge of these funds?—Put the interest low enough to find takers, but do not force any one to borrow against his wish."

"In the free and allied town of Amisus, which, thanks to you,[1] is governed by its own laws, a request has been handed me concerning mutual aid societies. I add it to this letter that you may see, my lord, how much may be tolerated or forbidden.—Allow them their societies (*eranoi*) which the treaty of alliance gives them, especially if, instead of expending the product of their assessments in cabals or illicit assemblies, they employ them to comfort their poor. In all the other towns of our dominion it should not be permitted."

"Most of my predecessors have accorded to the towns of Pontus and Bithynia a privileged lien upon the property of their debtors. It would be fitting, sir, that you should kindly make a regulation on this matter.—Let it be decided according to the laws peculiar to each town. If they have not a privilege over other creditors, I ought not to grant it to them at the expense of private individuals."

[1] Pliny is indeed correct (*Epist.*, x. 93) in uniting these words, which nevertheless clash with one another: *Civitas libera et fœderata quæ beneficio indulgentiæ tuæ legibus suis utitur*, for they did not fail to scrutinize, on occasion, the affairs of so-called free cities. Thus Trajan sent Maximus to Achaia *ad ordinandum statum liberarum civitatum* (Pliny, *Epist.*, viii. 24); Pliny himself had had a special mission into Bithynia (Wilmanns, 1,180); others received them from Hadrian. Cf. *C. I. L.*, Nos. 1,624, 4,033–4, and Orelli, No. 6,482. The towns themselves often invoked this intervention.

"The inhabitants of Apamea request me to examine their accounts, despite their privilege of administering their own affairs. Ought I to do it?—Yes, since they themselves desire it."

"Julius Piso has received 40,000 denarii as a gift from the senate of Amisus. The *ecdicus* reclaims them in accordance with your edicts, which forbid such acts of liberality.—If the gift dates back more than twenty years, let it subsist; for we must regard the security of the citizens while taking care of the public funds."

"The Nicæans pretend to have received from Augustus the privilege of collecting the inheritance of their fellow-citizens dying intestate.—Examine this affair in presence of the parties, with Gemellinus and my freedman, Epimachus, both procurators, and order what may appear to you just."

"The Byzantines spend annually 12,000 sesterces in transmitting to you their formal homage, and 3,000 to send one of their officers to salute the governor of Mœsia.—It is sufficient for them to forward to me through your hands their decree of homage. As to the governor of Mœsia, he will pardon them if they make their court to him cheaper." A reply which certainly pleased Byzantium, for, in spite of the police duties performed in the Empire, to go to Rome was not only an expense but a peril. Petronius and Apuleius show that highway robbers were numerous, and we possess a marble on which the good people of Mehadia on the Danube, sent out by their fellow-citizens, have engraved their gratitude toward the *Divinities of the Waters* for having brought them back safe and sound into their city.[1]

III. *The Decurions.*

We have just seen Pliny proposing to Trajan to constrain the decurions from subscribing to loans of which they had no need. It is the idea of placing in the care of the curiales the burdens of cities, which is beginning to dawn and which will soon

[1] *C. I. L.*, vol. iii. No. 1,562, in the year 150. These onerous deputations were very frequent: they arrived at every event of note in the life of the emperors, or at each dispute which arose between quarrelsome cities. A letter has recently been discovered from Antoninus to the Coroneians thanking them for having tendered their condolence for the death of Hadrian and their felicitations for the adoption of Marcus Aurelius. In another he reminds them that their deputies have requested him to decide between them and the Thespians on a matter of some plethra of pasturage. (*Bull. de Corresp. hellén.* for 1881, p. 456.)

render their condition deplorable.[1] Already they summon to the senate-house more than the prescribed number of members, and these members must pay for an honour which they have not always solicited. Pliny sees in this exaction a source of revenue for the cities and wishes to make it a legal prescript. "In certain towns of the province," he says, "the decurions are obliged, on their admission to the senate, to give—some, 1,000, others, 2,000 denarii. It pertains to you, sir, to make a general law.—No. The safest way is to follow the custom of each town, especially regarding those who are made decurions against their wish."

"The law of Pompey, observed in Bithynia, requires the age of thirty years in order to exercise the functions of the magistracy and enter the senate. But an edict of Augustus has permitted fulfilling the inferior magistracies at twenty-two years. I have concluded from this, that those who attain to these duties at that age ought to sit in the municipal senate. But what shall be done with regard to others who, having the age prescribed for the magistracies, have not obtained them?[2]—Close the senate-house to them."

IV. *Right of Citizenship.*

"To obtain the right of citizenship in a town it is necessary, by the law of Pompey, to be a native of the province. Many of the decurions belong to other countries. Should they be excluded from the senate-house?—No; but see to it that, in the future, the law is better observed."

V. *The Defender of the State.*

In some towns we already find ill-defined offices which will become that of the *defensor civitatis*, whose importance is so great in the fourth and fifth centuries. "Byzantium has a legionary centurion to watch over its privileges. Juliopolis of Bithynia desires of you the same favour.—Byzantium is a great city, where a large number of strangers land. A guardian of its rights is necessary to it. If I give one to Juliopolis all the small towns will want one. It pertains to you to keep watch that no injury be done to the cities in your government."

[1] In the third century the *decurions* were generally called *curiales*. (Henzen, No. 6,414, and *C. I. L.*, vol. v. No. 335).

[2] *Epist.* x. 83. Those whom their fortune and birth designated to fill them, as, at Rome, the sons of senators.

It has been seen above that Amisus had an *ecdicus*, a sort of town advocate or tribune whose duty it was to defend its interests before the governor.[1]

VI. *Religious questions.*

"May a temple of Cybele at Nicomedia be removed?—Yes.

Bas-relief consecrated to Cybele.[2]

The provincial soil is not *capable* of receiving Roman consecrations."

"I am asked to transfer tombs. At Rome a decision of the pontiffs is required. What must I do here?—Grant or refuse,

[1] There is found in an inscription of Hadrian (*C. I. L.*, vol. iii. No. 586) the name of *defensor*, but with the meaning of advocate pleading for the interests of the town. The ἔκδικος was, in the time of Cicero, the town advocate (*ad Famil.*, xiii. 56, and *ap.* Waddington, the inscription of Cibyra, No. 1,212). The σύνδικος was a citizen sent on extraordinary occasions to the emperor or governor for a special affair. (*Digest*, l. 4, 18, § 13). In this passage it is said: *Defensores quos Græci syndicos appellant.* Cf. Waddington, *ad n.* 628 and 1,175.

[2] Lebas and Waddington, *Voy. arch. en Grèce*, etc., pl. 44, fig. 1.

according to justice. It would be too hard to require provincials to come and consult Roman pontiffs in this matter."

"I have found a ruined house in which to put the bath of the Prusans. The proprietor chose to build a temple to Claudius in it, but nothing is left of it.—Put the bath in this house, unless the temple has been built, for, even though it may have disappeared, the place remains sacred."

"It is said, sir, that a woman and her sons were buried in the same place where your statue is set up. The statue is in a library, the burial places in a large court surrounded by galleries. I beg you to enlighten me as to judging this affair." It might have been a grave matter indeed, under another prince, for an accusation of high-treason might have arisen from it. Trajan is vexed that he should be thought capable of authorizing it and replies: "You should not have hesitated about such a question, for you know very well that I do not propose to make my name respected by terror and by judgments of *majesty*. Dismiss this accusation, which I shall not allow."

VII. *Military Discipline.*

"Should the prison be guarded by soldiers, or, according to custom, by public slaves? I have stationed both.—That is not well. Usage must be adhered to, and the soldier must not be sent away from his flag."

"The prefect of the Pontic coast, who has only twelve soldiers, asks for more.—No. All the chiefs wish to extend their command, and small garrisons destroy the military spirit."

"Slaves have been found among the recruits. What shall be done with them?—If they have been chosen, the fault is with the recruiting-officer; if they have been furnished as substitutes, you must punish those whose places they fill; if, knowing their condition, they have come and offered themselves, punish them."

VIII. *Civil Discipline.*

"In many towns, persons condemned to the mines or to combat as gladiators, are serving as public slaves, some of them with wages. What is to be done?—Execute the sentences, except in the case of those whose condemnation dates back more than twenty years."

"A man who was sentenced to perpetual banishment by

Bassus has remained in the province without making use of the right given him by a senatus-consultum, after the rescinding of the acts of Bassus, to claim within two years a new judgment.—He has disobeyed the law; send him to the prefects of the prætorium for a more rigorous punishment."

"Those assuming the *toga virilis*, marrying, inaugurating some public work, or entering on the exercise of a magistracy, are accustomed to invite the decurions and many people—sometimes more than 1,000 persons—and to give each one a denarius or two. I am afraid these re-unions are assemblies forbidden by your edicts. —You are right. But I have made choice of your prudence to reform all the abuses of this province."

"A great fire has devastated Nicomedia. Would it not be well to establish a society of 150 artisans, charged with the duty of looking after fires?—No; corporations are good for nothing."

This correspondence disgusts us with Pliny. Timid, undecided, hesitating about everything, as governor of a great province he makes a sorry figure.[1] Trajan, on the contrary, is clear and precise; he replies like an experienced and just master, commands without verbiage, and in everything makes the law respected. Beneath his affectionate words to "his very dear Secundus,"[2] one perceives the impatience of a superior whom an incapable subordinate disturbs every day with his troubles. But what especially results from this correspondence is the proof of the imperial omnipotence and of the fearful progress that the central government has made. It is true that, without a strong general administration, affairs of the State are not attended to and local affairs run the risk of being slighted; but to invade all civil rights, such as the penal right of cities, the administration of the finances, such as that of highways and public works, was too much. Already one might almost say that a paving-stone in the provinces could not be disturbed without a petition to Rome, as when it was a question of covering a muddy stream or removing a dead person whose tomb

[1] Yet he sought, after the example of Cicero, to give counsel to a governor. Compare the two letters (Pliny, viii. 24, and Cicero, *Ep. ad Quint.*, i. 1), and you have the measure of the difference between the two men.

[2] Pliny the Younger was called *C. Plinius Cæcilius Secundus.*

had fallen in; and they sent a courier to the prince to ask what guard they should place at the door of a prison.

Thus the emperor makes the law, and, by himself or his lieutenants, decides the particular cases; he governs the Empire, and we may say that he administers the cities, for he does not hesitate to look into all their affairs: that these towns are simply municipalities fallen under the power of Rome by conquest, or cities allied and free joined to the Empire by a treaty. Trajan, it is true, respects their laws and their privileges, because he is shrewd and wise; but his legate does not doubt that the prince might change everything. After reading this official correspondence, we easily form an idea of what the Empire will become when the emperor instead of being Trajan is Commodus or Elagabalus. We are as yet only in the second century, and we behold the dawning of the evil which is to undermine the Empire. Trajan speaks of persons who are made to enter the senate against their will,[2] and Pliny already regards the municipal magistrates as servants of the public service.

Trajan crowned with Laurel, wearing the *paludamentum*.[1]

It will be said that Pliny had a special mission,[3] that, as Libo will have under Marcus Aurelius,[4] he had obtained of the

[1] Cameo. Sardonyx of three layers, $3\frac{2}{10}$in. by $1\frac{8}{10}$. *Cabinet de France*, No. 240.

[2] . . . . *Qui inviti fiunt decuriones* (Pliny, *Epist.*, 114). That often occurred; the law of Malaga takes prevision of the case.

[3] Borghesi, *Œuvres*, vol. v. 407–415.

[4] *Se scripturum esse si quid forte dubitaret* (Capito, *Verus*, 9).

emperor authority to ask his advice in doubtful cases; that, finally, all the legates did not overwhelm the prince with so numerous letters. This may be so, but we cannot affirm it, since the official correspondence has perished, with a single exception, that of the governor of Bithynia. In any case, whether the emperor decides at Rome, or the proconsul declares it on the spot, the result is the same: the dependence of the provincials. Emperors like Caligula and Nero, entirely occupied with their pleasures, allow things to go as they will; princes like Tiberius and Vespasian, who found the task of governing the Empire sufficiently burdensome, gave no thought to the petty details of the administration of cities. Trajan, a man accustomed to command and discipline, wished to have everything in order, and this led him to look after everything. He has already created the *curators* to control the finances of certain towns; he sent commissioners extraordinary to suppress abuses in them. This was well. But these measures placed the government on a path where it will easily proceed until it comes to interfere, according to its good pleasure, with the smallest affairs, and check their progress. A freedman of Vespasian offers to the Cærites to construct at his expense a hall of re-union for their Augustales, on condition that they give him the ground. The municipal council cedes the land, but the consent of the curator is requisite, and that official occupies ten months in forwarding it.[1]

The most important of Pliny's letters relates to the Christians. They had not justified the fears at first inspired by their adoration of the crucified, which had appeared to some a menace of revolt. S. Paul had preached submission to authority, "to the prince who is the minister of God," and S. Peter wrote: "Honour all men."[2] The Church did not even labour directly to destroy slavery, that foundation of pagan society. Believers had slaves, and Christian slaves, to whom Peter said: "Servants, be in subjection to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward."[3] They accordingly lived peaceably and retired, multiplying in the midst of the poor by virtue of that

[1] Egger, *Examen des hist. d'Auguste*, p. 390.
[2] *Romans*, xiii. 1–7, and I. *Peter*, ii. 13, ii. 17.
[3] *Ibid.*, 18, and Paul, *Colossians*. iii. 22–24.

charity which revealed to them brethren in all the unfortunate. But the essential condition of their religion was prayer in common. Now Trajan did not like associations;[1] we have just seen that he would have none, not even against conflagrations, and that too great re-unions, though for a festival, were an object of suspicion to him. He perceived, without being able to account for it, a secret power, as it were, undermining Roman society, and his letters bear traces of the irritation he felt against everything which sought to go out of the established order. Hence it is not to be wondered at that the secret *agapæ* of the Christians appeared to him to be dangerous. Besides, one is forced to repeat, that, according to the legal enactments of this time, an attack against the gods of Rome was an insult to the emperor, and that, in consequence of the union of politics and religion, the unbelievers in the apotheosis of the prince became rebels against his authority. It is always so. Too often the present and the future are two mortal enemies, which in the eternal transformation of things come into collision and combat. The old world, destined to perish, wrathfully defends itself against that which attacks and will soon destroy it. The hemlock of Socrates, the cross of S. Peter, the stake of John Huss, the pillory of the Puritans, the Bastille of the Liberals, have had victims, but also triumphant deaths. Trajan, narrow-minded and harsh, like all that Roman race, despite his real greatness, was an enemy of novelty, and incapable of comprehending what was then coming. It would even be a matter of profound astonishment to see men such as Tacitus, Trajan, Pliny, Suetonius, Marcus Aurelius, unable to perceive the immense revolution which was in preparation, if all history did not testify to the ignorance in which the rulers of the day persist touching the powers that will rule on the morrow.

"It is, Sir, a rule which I prescribe to myself, to consult you upon all difficult occasions. I have never been present at the resolutions taken concerning the Christians, therefore I know not for what causes or how far they may be objects of punishment.

[1] He forbade them all. . . . . *Secundum mandata tua,* says Pliny, *hetærias esse vetueram.* Yet he reorganized one of them at Rome. But it was the guild of bakers: "By an admirable foresight," says Aurel. Victor (*de Cæs.*, 13), "and in order to maintain perpetual plenty at Rome, he re-established and consolidated the *pistorum collegium.*" On the right of association and the colleges or corporations of the Romans, see chap. lxxxiii. § 3.

Nor have I hesitated a little in considering whether the difference of age should not make some variation in our procedures. Are those who repent to be pardoned? Must they be punished for the name, although otherwise innocent? I have pursued this method. I have asked them if they were Christians, and to those who have avowed the profession I have put the same question a second and a third time, and have enforced it by threats of punishment. When they have persevered, I have put my threats into execution. For, whatever their confession might be, their audacious behaviour and immovable obstinacy required absolute punishment. Some who were infected with the same kind of madness, but were Roman citizens, have been reserved by me to be sent to Rome.[1]

"An information without a name was put into my hands containing a list of many persons who deny that they are, or ever were, Christians; for, repeating the form of invocation after me, they called upon the gods, and offered incense and made libations to your image; and they uttered imprecations against Christ, to which no true Christian, as they affirm, can be compelled by any punishment whatever. I thought it best, therefore, to release them. Others of them have said that they were Christians, and have immediately afterward denied it by confessing that they had entirely renounced the error several years before. All these worshipped your image and the images of the gods, and they even vented imprecations against Christ.

"They affirmed that the sum total of their fault, or of their error, consisted in assembling upon a certain stated day before it was light to sing alternately among themselves hymns to Christ as to a god; binding themselves by oath not to steal nor to rob, not to commit adultery nor break their faith when plighted, nor to deny the deposits in their hands whenever called upon to restore them. These ceremonies performed, they usually departed, and came together again to take a repast, the meat of which was innocent[2] and eaten promiscuously; but they had desisted from this custom since my edict, wherein by your commands I

[1] The right of appealing to the emperor was the most important of the privileges which remained to the citizens.

[2] *Cibum innoxium,* to reply to the accusation often brought against Jews of immolating children.

had prohibited all assemblies. From these circumstances, I thought it more necessary to try to gain the truth, even by torture, from two women who were said to officiate at their worship. But I could discover only an obstinate kind of superstition, carried to great excess. And, therefore, postponing any resolution of my own, I have waited the result of your judgment. To me an affair of this sort seems worthy of your consideration, principally from the multitude involved in the danger. For many persons of all ages, of all degrees, and of both sexes, are already and will be constantly brought into danger by these accusations. Nor is this superstitious contagion confined only to the cities; it spreads itself through the villages and the country."

As a good courtier, Pliny adds that the evil may be stopped, that it is so already, since the deserted temples behold the crowd returning, the sacred rites are again performed, and the victims, which hitherto had few purchasers, are now sold everywhere; and, like an honest man who would not send inoffensive persons to punishment, he asks the prince to grant pardon on repentance.

Trajan does not appear to have been greatly moved by the contradictory picture which his legate had sketched: this impious contagion which was reaching the towns and hamlets, this new life which was displaying itself in the temples; and he refused to take any general measures. "In an affair of this general nature," he says, "it is impossible to lay down any settled form. The Christians need not be sought after. If they are brought into your presence and convicted they must be punished. But anonymous informations ought not to have the least weight against any crime whatever."

This sentiment was so thoroughly Roman that two persons of consular rank, of very peaceful disposition, express themselves on this subject in the same fashion at two centuries distance from each other. "Let no one," says Cicero, "have peculiar gods; let no one introduce new or strange gods, unless they have been admitted by public authority."[1] And under Alexander Severus, Dion Cassius makes Mæcenas recommend to Augustus to punish the worshippers of false gods.[2]

[1] *De Leg.*, ii. 8 . . . . *nisi publice adscitos.*

[2] lii. 36.

Like orders, called forth by similar requests, were doubtless sent elsewhere, and what took place in Bithynia must have occurred in other provinces, even with more rigour wherever governors were found less humane and populations less peaceable, who thought they avenged their gods by crying out in the amphitheatre: "The Christians to the beasts!" Thus the tradition of the Church places under this reign the martyrdoms of S. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, and of S. Simeon, bishop of Jerusalem—martyrdoms which we do not recount, because the internal history of the Church cannot come within the limits of this general history of the Empire.[1]

The two letters which we have just quoted throw light on several points. Pliny, born under Nero before the burning of Rome, a lawyer, jurisconsult, senator, and consular, mingling in all the political activity of his time, knew very imperfectly when he arrived in Bithynia what a Christian was—a proof that there had never been as yet any legal information against them, any solemn decision or general persecution.[2] It is because they and he in spirit belonged to two different worlds, and while speaking the same language could not comprehend each other. Hence, I am assured that Trajan, the rigorous guardian of military and civil discipline, sent a Christian to punishment with no more hesitation and remorse than if it had been a question of a refractory soldier or of a fugitive slave.[3] These cruelties are revolting to us, and

[1] There are, besides, great doubts with reference to the *Acts* of S. Ignatius, which appear to have been drawn up very long after, according to Uhlhorn, in the sixth century (cf. *C. I. L.*, vol. iii. p. 103), and the authenticity of his *Letters* is open to much dispute.

[2] We have seen, pp. 506 *sq.*, what the persecution under Nero was; under Domitian there was a legal condemnation of certain citizens who, not belonging to the Jewish nation, *judaized*, that is, abandoned the national faith; the words of Pliny prove that, among these *judaizers*, were included the Christians, since he condemned some before having received Trajan's reply. This prince was the first to withdraw from the Christians, without distinction of origin, the privilege of the legal tolerance under which the sectaries of foreign religions existed; but there was, under him, no search, no *inquisitio;* they punished the *public manifestation*, which was of itself alone a public revolt against the law and the magistrates. Hence there was only a small number of martyrs until the great persecution of Decius (Origen, *Adv. Cels.*, iii. 8). Even then, a church so flourishing as that at Alexandria only reckoned seventeen martyrs—eleven men and six women (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, vi. 41), and in almost every time the remains of the victims could be rescued.

[3] The number of the condemned must have been very small, for neither Tertullian (*Apol.*, v.), nor Melito (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iv. 26), nor Lactantius (*de Morte persecutorum*, chap. iii.), counted Trajan among the persecutors. From Domitian, says Lactantius (*ibid.*), to Decius, *multi ac boni principes Romani imperii clarum regimenque tenuerunt.* Christian inscriptions dating back with certainty to the third century, that is, one century after Trajan, are yet

these violations of the rights of conscience make us indignant; but it must be considered that the contemporaries of Trajan thought as he did and could not think otherwise: that to them the Christians were rebels, and that, in fact, these men who were going to break up the old order of things were the greatest revolutionists the world had yet seen. We are with them against their perse-

Tomb at Delphi (Lebas and Waddington, *op. cit.*, pl. 39).

cutors, though with grief obliged to say that they experienced the lot of all reformers, that which they themselves afterwards inflicted on whoever undertook to replace the old law by a new one.[1] Is it very long since to act as did the Christians of Pliny, with other ideas, ceased to expose persons to the same peril?

Trajan, who inscribes on the penal code of Rome a new crime, that of *Christianizing*, attempts at the same time to consolidate the

very rare. (*Comptes rendus de l'Acad. des inscr.*, 1867, p. 168.) M. de Rossi dates two of them in 107 and 110. (*Inscr. Christ. ant.*, 2 and 3.)

[1] Tertullian expressly says: *Sacrilegii et majestatis rei convenimur. Summa hæc causa immo tota est* (*Apol.*, x.). It must be added that the law of majesty did not only involve the penalty of death, but also torture. (Paulus, *Sent.*, v. 29, § 2.) Besides, Tertullian well understands that these two societies are absolutely incompatible with each other. "The emperors," says he, "would have believed in Christ, had not Cæsars been necessary to the world, or if they could have been at once Christian and Cæsar. . . . . *Si aut Cæsares non essent sæculo necessarii, aut si et christiani potuissent esse Cæsares*" (*Apol.*, xxi.).

View of Delphi (Castri), from the South West.

masters of Olympus upon their crumbling thrones. In a long inscription recently discovered, we have proof of his solicitude to restore to the ancient gods their honours and to an old institution its authority. In the time of Strabo, Delphi was very poor, although the domain of the temple was very rich, since a single one of its forests of olives, on one of the spurs of Parnassus, yields to-day an annual revenue of 70,000 drachmas. But this domain had been invaded on all sides by neighbouring cities, despite a solemn judgment of the amphictyons who, 190 years before our era, had fixed its limits. Trajan charged one of the great men of the Empire to have the amphictyonic decision respected as sovereign law, to restore to the god his property, and to set in place again the twenty-six consecrated boundaries.[1] Was this pious zeal on his part? Not at all. Apollo and his associate divinities were to him perfectly indifferent. But, after the example of Augustus and Vespasian, he considered the official religion as a necessity of public order. He was pre-eminently a conservator, and we must recognize the fact that he could not be otherwise.

IV.—The Parthian War.

After a few years Trajan thought he had gained, by his labours in time of peace, the right to return to his military tastes, and to revive his Dacian triumphs by new victories. Old age was approaching. He was fifty-nine, or it may be, sixty-two years old. If he did not now take up arms again he never would, and his glory would be limited. Britain was too narrow a theatre, good for Claudius; the Germans afforded no pretext for any war; Dacia was becoming Latinized peaceably, and from the mountains of Caledonia to the borders of the Euxine no field of battle presented itself where any far-sounding exploit could be performed. On the south bank of the Mediterranean the Empire had reached an impassable frontier, the desert. There was then nothing to be done, either in Europe or in Africa; at least, he thought so. There

[1] Wescher, *Mém. des Sav. étr. de l'Acad. des inscr.*, pp. 54 *sq.*, and *C. I. L.*, vol. iii. No. 566. Cf. *Additam.*, p. 987.

remained Asia. In this direction one might find to accomplish what complaisant history styles great deeds: for instance, to make Armenia an outpost against Asiatic barbarism, as Dacia was against European; to subdue the Euphrates and the Tigris, as the Rhine and the Danube had been; in a word, to finish in the East the work of consolidating the frontiers of the Empire. It was the reasoning of the reign of Trajan; but for him war was above all things an ardent desire for glory,[1] and he was right in having himself represented, on his arch of triumph, sacrificing to Mars: it was the god whom he had best served.

Trajan offering a Sacrifice to Mars.[2]

The motive of the expedition was an attempt of the Arsacidæ to re-establish their influence in Armenia. Chosroes had succeeded in placing his nephew Exedares on the throne of this country, which the Romans wished to keep under their influence at least; and Trajan had not forgotten that at the court of Ctesiphon they had doubtless lent an ear to the overtures of Decebalus to form a vast coalition, which would have menaced the Empire in Asia while the Dacians should attack it in Europe. The emperor went during the winter of 113 to Athens, where Chosroes, disturbed by the magnitude of the preparations which threatened him, sent him a humble embassy with rich presents, limiting his demand to a request that the Roman should grant the kingdom of Armenia to another of his nephews, Parthamasiris. The emperor sent back the embassy and the presents, and said that he would make known his answer when he should be on the banks of the Euphrates. At the opening of the year 114 he arrived at Antioch, and that all the capitals might possess trophies of his Dacian war he deposited in the temple of

[1] . . . . Τῇ δ' ἀληθείᾳ, δόξης ἐπιθυμίᾳ (Dion, lxviii. 17). Dierauer (*Gesch. Traj.*, p. 153) combats very justly the motives which Merivale assigns for the expedition of Trajan to the East, and which the English historian draws chiefly from the fear inspired in this prince by the Christians, about whom he hardly concerned himself, and by the Jews, to whom he gave no attention.

[2] Fragment of a bas-relief of the Arch of Trajan, now in the Arch of Constantine.

MAP FOR TRAJAN'S EXPEDITION AGAINST THE PARTHIANS.

Lithog. by W. & A. K. Johnston, Edinburgh & London.

Jupiter Kasios some offerings which Hadrian celebrated in Greek verses.[1]

The military events of the years 114–117 are very imperfectly known to us, and the chronology of the Parthian campaigns is uncertain. Trajan had first to re-establish discipline in the lax and seditious legions of the Eastern provinces. He applied his customary severity, and everything yielded to this energetic hand. He entered on the campaign in the very heart of summer, and

Fortress serving as Treasury and Tomb to the Kings of Armenia.[2]

ascended the valley of the Euphrates as far as Armenia Major. In his first letter, Parthamasiris had assumed the title of king; it was sent back without reply; in a second he suppressed the title, but asked that they should send the governor of Cappadocia to treat with him. The emperor summoned him to come himself. The Armenian hesitated to confide himself to the Roman good faith, yet, as the legions still continued advancing, he came to the camp, saluted the emperor seated upon his tribunal with the entire army drawn up behind him, laid down at his feet the crown which

[1] *Anthol. palat.*, vi. 332.

[2] To-day Ani, on the left bank of the west branch of the Euphrates (*Kara-su*) and anciently called Camacha, "the corpse." The remains of Roman ramparts are seen there. (Texier, *Arménie*, pl. 15 or 16.)

he had upon his head, and erect, silent, with the grave dignity of the Orientals, waited until Trajan should permit him to take up his diadem. At the sight of this Arsacid, of this uncrowned king who seems to them a captive, the soldiers sent up an immense shout as after a victory, and proclaimed their general *imperator*. The prince, in the midst of the camp, was required to set forth his requests. "But I have not been conquered!" cries he; "I have not been made prisoner! It is of my own free-will that I have come, in the expectation that my kingdom would be rendered to me by you, as it was to Tiridates by Nero." "Armenia," replies Trajan, "belongs to Rome, and shall have a Roman governor." Some Armenians and Parthians had accompanied the prince to the camp. Trajan retained the first as being already his subjects, and suffered Parthamasiris to lead away the others, giving them an escort to prevent them from holding communication with any one. We do not know in detail what afterwards took place. Eutropius speaks of the murder of Parthamasiris, and in a fragment discovered on a palimpsest a friend of Marcus Aurelius said: "It is difficult to excuse Trajan in the matter of the death of this king. Doubtless he perished justly in the midst of the tumult which he had excited; but, for the honour of Rome, it would have been preferable that this suppliant should return without harm than suffer a merited punishment."[1] Was Parthamasiris slain while attempting to escape from his escort, or did they feign an attack so as to have an opportunity to be rid of him? We do not know; but it is clear that, if he did not fall into an ambush on his departure, he fell into one on his arrival. This fashion of overthrowing a king had nothing heroic in it, and it has left a stain of blood on the hand of Trajan. Neither he nor any one else saw it then. This stranger was a source of annoyance: they suppressed him; the political morality of the time was not shocked, and the friend of Marcus Aurelius was perhaps alone in being astonished

Trajan and Parthamasiris (Large Bronze of the *Cabinet de France*).

[1] . . . . *Meliore tamen Romanorum fama impune supplex abisset, quam jure supplicium luisset.* It is a fragment of Fronto, the friend of Marcus Aurelius, *ap. Principia historiæ*, p. 209 of his *Works*, ed. Naber, 1867.

at it. They even dared, at Rome, to strike a medal on which Parthamasiris is represented bare-headed and bending the knee, with the brief and disdainful legend: *Rex Parthus*, without even the name of his kingdom.[1]

Trajan, by his renown and by the imposing mass of his forces, caused such consternation that the peoples and kings, from the Euphrates to the Caucasus and from the Euxine to the Caspian, submitted without combat. For two centuries Rome had dreamed of this conquest, and with reason, for it would have given the key to one of the gates of Asia, the Caucasus, whose narrow defiles[2] are so easy to render impassible, and it would have assured in Armenia an excellent position for attack or defence. In Rome's hands the lofty mountains of this country would have become an impregnable fortress, which would have covered Asia Minor and even Syria. Well-established forts at the head of the valleys of the Tigris and the Euphrates would have rendered any attack against their rich provinces impossible, or at least exceedingly dangerous for the assailant. In fact, before reaching the two great passes of the river at Thapsak and Zeugma, where the last hills of the Amanus[3] disappear, a Parthian army would have been constrained to march along the foot of the Armenian mountains, at the constant risk of being taken in flank or turned. More to the south the desert defends Syria, and defended it well until the day when religious fanaticism caused an unexpected enemy to issue from these solitudes.

The occupation of Armenia was then required by great interests, and Trajan did well—except as to the means employed—to settle a question which Pompey, Cæsar, Antony, and Augustus had failed to solve—some for lack of time, others for want of skill or resolution. But, the more important this acquisition was, the

[1] Cohen, ii., *Traj.*, Nos. 207 and 376. See the coin given on page 826.

[2] The Caucasus, whose highest point, the Elbruz, exceeds by nearly 3,280 feet the height of Mont Blanc, has scarcely one practicable pass, that of *Dariel*, which attains, at Kreuzberg, an altitude of more than 8,200 feet, and is so narrow that at the place called the Caucasian Gates it is supposed to have been formerly closed by gates of iron. The chain falls, at its two extremities, into the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea.

[3] Mount Amanus, which runs from the Euphrates to the sea, absolutely hems in Asia Minor, only leaving two narrow passes at its extremities—on the sea, the Syrian Gates; on the Euphrates, the Amanic Gates. Here the stream scarcely makes a passage for itself through the cataracts between the Amanus and the Taurus, which joins on to the lofty peaks of Armenia. The two mountains then give to Asia Minor a formidable rampart.

more necessary to assure it to the Empire by giving to the new province a civil and military organization which should promptly make it Roman, and by employing for this work of patience the forces, resources, and time which Trajan was about to squander in useless expeditions.

He passed the winter of 114–115 at Antioch, which during his visit was almost destroyed by an earthquake: a great number of notable persons lost their lives by it; the consul, with Vergilianus Pedo, was seriously injured, and Trajan was near perishing. The pagans without doubt attributed this disaster to the wrath of the gods, irritated by the impiety of the Christians, and S. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, about that time suffered martyrdom. We have seen that Trajan did not hesitate to consider the Christians as rebels, and when they made public profession of their faith, as rebels who should be punished. He did not then experience any scruples, before a people convulsed with fear, in satisfying at one stroke his gods, the populace, and the detestable laws of the Empire.[1]

In the spring he crossed the Euphrates, doubtless at Zeugma, and proceeded to Edessa, whose prince was saved by his son.[2] From this town he sent forward across Mesopotamia a column of advance guard led by Lusius Quietus: it captured the stronghold of Singara, which commanded the road from the desert. He himself carried Nisibis, and as all the chiefs of this region were at war among themselves or in revolt against Chosroes, he was able to reach the borders of the Tigris without difficulty, opposite Adiabene. It was there that Alexander had vanquished Darius and conquered Asia. Trajan delighted to follow the track of the Macedonian hero, whose good fortune he hoped to attain. The Tigris had in these parts a broad and deep channel; a fleet was needed to cross it and to insure communications. The remainder of the season was employed in constructing in the forests of Nisibis boats which were taken apart and carried on carts to the points selected for the passage. Astonished at seeing their river so easily overcome and this barrier fallen, the barbarians made no resistance to a spirited

[1] According to the *Acts of Martyrdom* of S. Ignatius he must have been condemned at Antioch by the emperor and sent from there to Rome to be thrown to the wild beasts; this is scarcely probable. We have already remarked the evident intention of the compilers of these *Acts* to furnish a sequel to the last voyage of S. Paul. Cf. Dierauer, p. 169, No. 3.

[2] Καλοῦ καὶ ὡραίου ὄντος καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τῷ Τραϊανῷ ᾠκειωμένου (Dion, lxviii. 21).

assault which gave to the Romans the left bank. Although this success was not equivalent to the victory of Arbela, it opened, as that did, the road to Babylon, which the Parthians, enfeebled by their feuds, did not venture to blockade. Trajan entered it with the title of *Parthicus*, which his soldiers bestowed upon him, and sacrificed to the manes of Alexander in the palace where the hero had expired. This was in the year 116.

Public opinion was dazzled by these facile triumphs. Every day the senate learned that new peoples had submitted to his sway; that kings consented to receive their crowns from him: that

Trophy of Victory (Bas-relief of the Temple of Mars at Merida).

countries bearing the great names of Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria, which recalled those of Ninus, Semiramis, Xerxes, and Alexander, were subjects of his Empire. With the eagerness of a youthful victor, Trajan hastened to declare the regions traversed by his army to be united for ever to the domain of the Roman people. Already Armenia formed one province: he made two others from it—that of Mesopotamia, between the Tigris and the Euphrates, at the foot of the Armenian mountains, and that of Assyria, comprising the eastern valley of the Tigris as far as the chain of the Zagros, which separates it from Media. At the same time great preparations were completed. An entire fleet brought down the Euphrates was dragged to the Tigris, across the isthmus which extends between the two rivers, in order to attack

Ctesiphon.[1] The Parthians defended their capital no better than their provinces. Chosroes or his successor fled to the interior of Media; the daughter of the great king and his throne of massive gold were captured at Susa, and Seleucia, the ancient Greek capital, opened its gates. Master of the principal places of Babylonia, Trajan descended the Tigris with his fleet, receiving on his passage the submission of the chiefs along the banks, and arrived at the Persian Gulf. Here, seeing a vessel setting out for India, he exclaimed: "Were I younger, I would give to Rome for its frontier the limits of the empire of Alexander!" And the Eternal City, confident as its prince, struck medals representing Armenia overthrown and trampled under foot by the emperor, or two Parthians seated on the ground, having before them an empty quiver and a bow unstrung.[3] But these Parthians were going to rise, the quiver was about to be filled, the bow to twang again, and the victorious emperor will hear, even in his camp, the whirr of those arrows which he thought he had broken.

Trajan wearing a Cuirass.[2]

[1] Or more precisely, by the canal called *Naharmalcha*, "royal river," which extended from the Euphrates to the Tigris.

[2] Statue of Parian marble, found at Gabii. (Museum of the Louvre. Clarac, No. 48.) The cuirass, in place of a head of Medusa, bears a mask of Triton. In this has been seen an allusion to the Roman fleets which Trajan sent to the Indian ocean.

[3] Cohen, ii., *Trajan*, Nos. 318 and 375. See these coins on the following page.

Already, in fact, defections broke out everywhere in his rear. Seleucia had risen in rebellion, and the revolt of the towns in the north of Mesopotamia, by which the Roman army had penetrated into Assyria, threatened to hem in the Romans in the desert. It was to be feared that the expedition would end like that of Crassus. Trajan's generals struck some vigorous blows. Nisibis was recaptured; Edessa and Seleucia, carried by assault, were delivered to the flames. These successes served at least to conceal under the appearance of victories a forced retreat. Trajan even decided, in order to check these dangerous movements, to restore the Parthian royalty, which he had thought to destroy. On his return to Ctesiphon, in the midst of the people and of the army, he placed the crown of the King of Kings upon the head of an Arsacidan, Parthamaspates; then, by the shortest way, he resumed the route to Syria. Stopped in a desert without water or forage, before the little place of Atra, he sought to carry it and was repulsed. A legate and many legionaries perished there; men of his escort were killed around him. "The victorious emperor returning to Rome in triumph over so many nations marked his route with blood and by the dead bodies of his soldiers."[3]

Trajan placing his foot upon Armenia.[1]

Trajan and Parthamaspates.[2]

The fatigue, the chagrin, and perhaps some malady contracted like that of Alexander in the marshy plains of Babylonia, undermined his robust constitution. He reached Antioch, where he bade farewell to his army, but was unable to go further than Selinus in Cilicia. He died at that place on the 10th of August, 117.

He left the East on fire. In the island of Cyprus and at Cyrene in Egypt a formidable insurrection of the Jews had broken out, the signal for which seems to have been given by the

[1] ARMENIA ET MESOPOTAMIA IN POTESTATEM P. R. REDACTÆ, S. C. (Large bronze, Cohen, No. 318.)

[2] REX PARTHIS DATVS S. C. Trajan seated, presenting Parthamaspates standing, to Parthia kneeling. (Great bronze of the *Cabinet de France*, Cohen, No. 375.)

[3] Fronto, *Princ. Hist.*, p. 204: . . . . *Legatus cum exercitu cæsus, et principis ad triumphum decedentis haudquaquam secura nec incruenta regressio.*

co-religionists of Mesopotamia,[1] and the recent conquests reverted to their former masters. Once again the Roman Empire, as in the time of Crassus and Antony, was convicted of inability to extend

Trajan giving a King to the Parthians. (After one of the four bas-reliefs of the Arch of Trajan, now in the Arch of Constantine.)

itself beyond the Euphrates and that line of deserts which separates two worlds. The West even, was disturbed, at least along its borders. The Moors were wearying Africa with their incursions, the Britons were uneasy in their island, and the Sarmatians

[1] We may conclude from a military diploma of Domitian that, already under this prince, there had been some ferment in Palestine, since we see him, in the year 86, sending troops thither and retaining the veterans on duty.

menaced the provinces of the Danube.[1] Such is the state in which Trajan left the Empire, and history judges reigns by their results, as the tree is judged by its fruit.

He had desired to resume the policy of conquest of the Republic and of Cæsar, which Augustus and his successors had abandoned. Was he right? Yes, and no. Yes, for the expedition to Armenia and the conquest of the country of the Dacians; no, for those of Babylon and Ctesiphon. We have several times given the reasons which ought to terminate at the upper waters of the Euphrates and the Tigris the frontier of the Empire. To go further in this direction was to go contrary to the nature of things, which is the greatest of forces. It was not the same upon the Danube. Trajan, who was bent on reviving the military spirit of the Romans, did well in conquering Dacia. But he should have completed his work by planting his eagles on the other side of the Theiss and in Bohemia. Then the Empire would have inclosed within its frontiers the whole valley of the Danube and held the chain of mountains which extends, almost without interruption, from the suburbs of Mayence to the Black Sea, by the already fortified Taunus, by the mountains

Statue, broken at its lower part, of a High Priest of the Temple of Athieno, in Cyprus. (*Gazette archéol.*, 1878, pl. 36, and p. 192.)

[1] *Mauri lacessebant, Sarmatæ bellum inferrebant, Britanni teneri sub Romana ditione non poterant* (Spartian, *Hadr.*, 5).

of Franconia, Bohemia, Moravia, and the Carpathians. Master of this grand line of defence, collecting its forces in the provinces situated in the rear, increasing in them the number of the military posts, the colonies of veterans, and, on the other side of the mountains, developing in the midst of the Germans the Roman manner of life by commercial relations and the contagion of example, the Empire would have resisted longer the assaults of barbarism.

But these services would have been without striking effect; and Trajan desired the re-echoing glory given by the conquest, though ephemeral, of the Parthian capitals and an expedition rivalling that of Alexander. Let us, however, terminate the history of this great reign by the wish that, after the time of Trajan, the senate always expressed on the accession of a new emperor: "May you be happier than Augustus, better than Trajan!" The Middle Ages have taken up this thought, and Dante has placed Trajan in his *Paradise*.

Trajan in a Chariot, drawn by ten Horses. (After a Coin.)

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